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# MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

SEPTEMBER 5 2005

## Should this baby die?

IN HOLLAND, DOCTORS ROUTINELY EUTHANIZE SEVERELY ILL INFANTS.  
THE PROS & CONS OF A WRENCHING DEBATE THAT'S HEADED OUR WAY.



**Why Canadian astronomers  
are masters of the universe**

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## MACLEAN'S.CA

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John Geddes reports on the political buzz surrounding newly appointed University of Toronto fellow Michael Ignatieff. [www.macleans.ca/magazine/academia-to-politics/](http://www.macleans.ca/magazine/academia-to-politics/)

**WARREN KINSERLA** In conversation with the lawyer, political consultant and punk rocker on his new book and the state of the Liberal party. [www.macleans.ca/magazine/warren-kinslerla/](http://www.macleans.ca/magazine/warren-kinslerla/)

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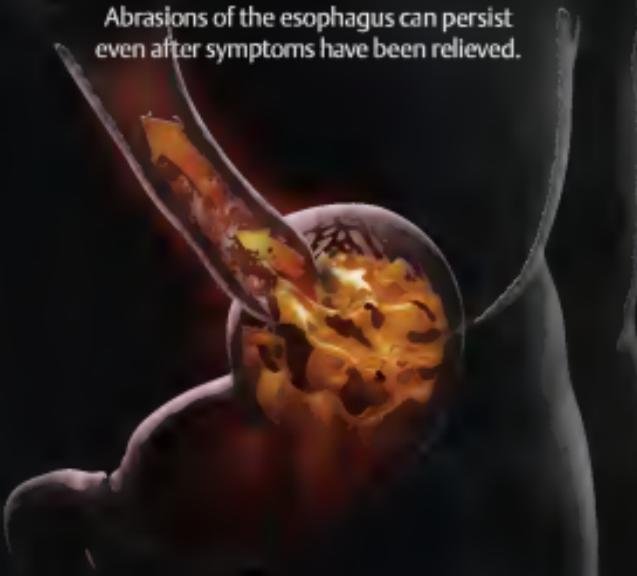
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**'Cohen's work is getting better and better, which is saying a hell of a lot. We love you, Leonard, and are putting by funds for your next 13 CDs.'** —April Krueger, Hellzapoppin

Beautiful loser

It is an unfortunate sign of the times we live in that Leonard Cohen finds himself embroiled, at the age of 70, in such a tangled web of money management and deceit ("Devotion," Cover, Aug. 23). His legacy is that he has succeeded in turning out a body of work any artist would envy, and his words in which we will remember him by. But, if that has to happen to somebody, who else has the intestinal fortitude to not only prevail, but set things straight and go on being his remarkable self? If it's obviously going to be messy, ugly and painful, and I personally wish him all the best.

G. E. Latrice, Webster

How does the emerging plot of Leonard Cohen fit in a cover story? It made of tabloid sensationalism with its mingled invention. The reference to "sunrise sex," for example, had no connection to Cohen and yet his use of the words "sunrise" to describe his money troubles did appear to be a relevant description. In fact, the whole story is punctuated out of illogicism and conjecture, with absolutely no conclusion of note. It will be interesting to read an account of the facts when the matter is resolved. As for now, let's let Cohen, who, by your own account, deserves some respect, work through his personal affairs while we focus on annual import.

It was with much elation that I read the article about Leonard Cohen. As a child of the sixties, Leonard instilled in me a love for poetry and music. I consider him to be one of my mentors, and so the day I appreciate his contribution to Canadian arts. Good wishes to him in all his endeavours. Jennifer Shattock, Victoria, BC.

Leonard Cohen doesn't have to worry. I have enjoyed his music a lot over the years and would be willing to have him come and stay at my house so he doesn't have to fear poverty and homelessness. We have a nice guest room with attached bathroom, private



devotion, and pleasure, would constitute healthy needs for my husband and son. In return, the fulfilling around the house and conversation about art would be appreciated.

Encourage other Carolatarians who have appreciated Cohen's wit and poesy over the years to act generously and let him know that he is not alone and that we will take care of him.

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ut to the chase. The mistake Cohen admits to is that, "I paid close attention to everything except the possibility that my most august would endorse any emergencies in the discharge of her duties." It's a simple people—Cohen requires a fastidious

I will be watching for the details of Cohen's trial. The one 12 years ago was the best entertainment I have ever had. It is a masterpiece with a bittersweet ending.

last won a wonderful article by Brian D. Johnson describing the Leonard Cohen that most readers know and love ("Up close and personal"). Leonard has been there for

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of everyone life should continue no more than 12,000 years.

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many people in spiritual or financial trouble over the years. He is a true gentleman and a great saint. The allegations of Jewish "old-boy" lifetimes are pure nonsense and won't stand up in court.

Pierre Tessier, Montreal

Today night is the Jewish tradition in the beginning of the Sabbath—Shabbat in Hebrew—and the evening meal is known as the Shabbat dinner. The Seder is the festive meal that is celebrated during the first two nights of the holiday of Passover, which took place this year on a Saturday and a Sunday night in April. So I think Jehovah got the two mixed up. Other than that, I enjoyed his article and envy the fact that he shared mousli beef soup and beef brisket with Leoni.

Howard Becker, Mississauga, Ont.

#### The GG controversy

The government designate, Micheline Jean, has been accused of consorting with separatists ("Loyal enough?" Governor General, Aug. 22). The fact that Jean accepted the Prime Minister's invitation is proof enough of her loyalty to Canada. Many Quebecers are of the opinion that Quebec, as a nation, should be accommodated within the Canadian state, and many more are now sure. We must accept this fact and do our best to move on. I hope Jean will win the hearts of all Canadians and become the strongest symbol of Canadian democracy in recent memory.

Syed Nabi Sheik, Toronto

We are all Canadians, whether we came here, as my mother's family did, in the 1700s or yesterday. And we do not lose that designation voluntarily, or without purpose. For those of us who got here by an accident of birth, we should remember that Micheline Jean chose us. She is a wonderful successor to the equally fine current Governor General.

Kito Bhogal, Vancouver

The fact that this whole issue of Jean is up for discussion, regardless of the source, says that the choice is a bad one. Martin should cancel her appointment because even if she stumbled as governor general, the controversy will continue. I can just see all of the academics, filmmakers, poets



Bell's subject, Mohammed, as a spy, ordinary

and former FLQ members dancing at Queen Elizabeth's very expensive party, roasting the broiling of Canada. The enemy within, you say?

Mervin Hollingsworth, Sudbury

Ask not what Jean and her husband/him (or have not) done for Canada, but what they will do for Canada.

Red Prefontaine, Gatineau, Que.

If the governor general designate held both Canadian and U.S. citizenship, our intelligentsia would have a collective heart attack. Micheline Jean, while a Canadian citizen, chose to apply for and receive French citizenship. Can Jean remain loyal both to Canada and a country that favors the discrimination of Canada?

William Armstrong, Ottawa

#### Terror and tolerance

The inside tales from Stewart Bell's book *The Martyr's Oath* (The Macmillan Company, Aug. 22) is the best story I've read so far on the tuning of a seemingly ordinary

boy into an al-Qaeda operative, or as Bell writes, "a bumbling, educated and otherwise moron young man into a killer." Al-Qaeda uses the same techniques in cults. They take advantage of young people, seduce them and slowly seduce them in. They're moulded and re-educated with a premise of moral

**The Minibosses**  
Bog cheap  
beer while  
driving &  
hammering in  
that garish  
conspicuous  
consumption is  
apalling.

intuition. They become psyching silly tripped, their critical thinking suppressed. Awareness about the methods of indoctrination used by such groups is essential in preventing more young people from getting marginalised.

Carrie Beattie, Cheltenham, Ont.

I find Toronto mayor Rob Ford's comments about the London bombings being planned and executed by the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad and the CIA absolutely outrageous ("It could happen now," Terror, Aug. 22). Canadians have little tolerance and unfortunately too much tolerance for religious actions. If Mr. Ford wants to operate an extreme religious Islamic centre, I suggest that he return to Egypt to do so (or find somewhere else if it doesn't want him).

Marcus Ralliance, Ottawa

#### Going to the dogs

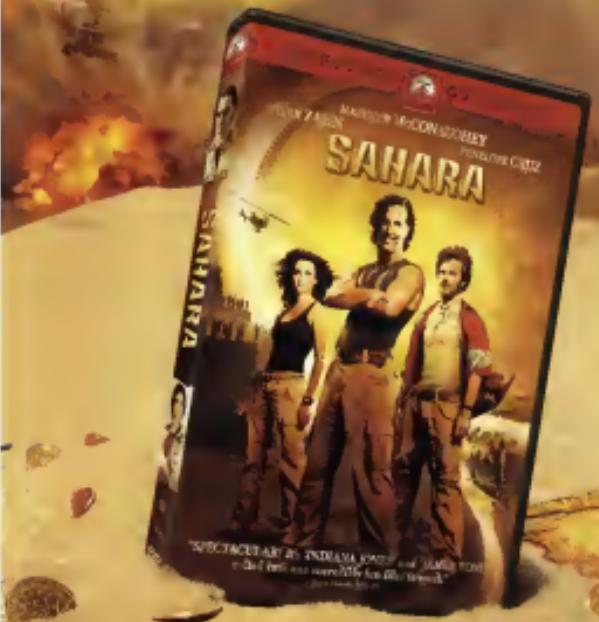
Many of us participate in this sport of canine freestyle. See it as a form of higher training ("Doggie dancing," Life, Aug. 22). We choose not to be called "doggie dancers." If you had found a less demeaning term, you would have had a nice article. This sport is a lot of fun, but there are several different versions, and not all of us "sing our bottoms." We prefer to highlight the canine-human bond and showcase the dog's skills.

Karen Johnson, Madison, Wis.

#### Cheap beer with an ego chaser

John Lewis's article "Lever" (large gifts) (ads!, Business, Aug. 15), about brother and sister Jennifer and Murph Morris and their Mountain Crest Brewing Co., paints a picture of a pair of semi-fictitious, insensitive, money-grabbing boors. Probably the only sentence from the Morris siblings that indicates they have any grasp on the reality of the image they project is Roslyn's saying "Our egos were way too big," although the use of the past tense is inappropriate. These people and their business are offensive on several levels. The garish conspicuous consumption that has them flagging cheap beer while driving a Hummer H1 is appalling. But the most offensive example is that, after seeing a homeless person whose car collection included some of their empties, Murph had the insensitivity to laugh and call it a mark of success,

# ACTION and ADVENTURE This Hot Could Only Happen In One Place...



**Things Heat Up On DVD August 30.**

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rather than giving the poor fellow some  
cigarettes so he could buy a few cases of the  
stuff or slipping him a few bucks to make  
his life easier.

Who says young people don't have it together and don't have a work ethic? I am glad to see young, enthusiastic successful in Canada in all kinds of businesses—who would have thought it would be in the beer industry! I love the slogan "Barn Good Beer"—it's very earthy. It's what the big boys (Molson and Labatt) are missing: conviviality and back-to-the-roots marketing and advertising.

Save for the blog jam

The genius of blogging is not the volume of material that's thrown into the public domain, as Steve Mesh claims ("Nothing to blog about," May 20).

short," All Thisness, Aug. 22), but the ease with which anybody can now publish content and reach an audience. We longer sit the imagination needs the gatekeepers of what newsworthy New, blogging-enabled media democratization has created thousands of content sites that bring equal number of different perspectives to the conversation. Much culture question the number of active blogs that now—why, I'm not sure. Whether there are one or four or eight million active blogs right now is irrelevant. The point is that blog creation is growing because of a huge number of people who are willing to contribute to a shared repository of knowledge. At the end of the column, I was amazed to find a link to Martin's own blog. Why does Martin blog, if he doesn't believe it provides some educational utility over the traditional model of publishing four times a month?

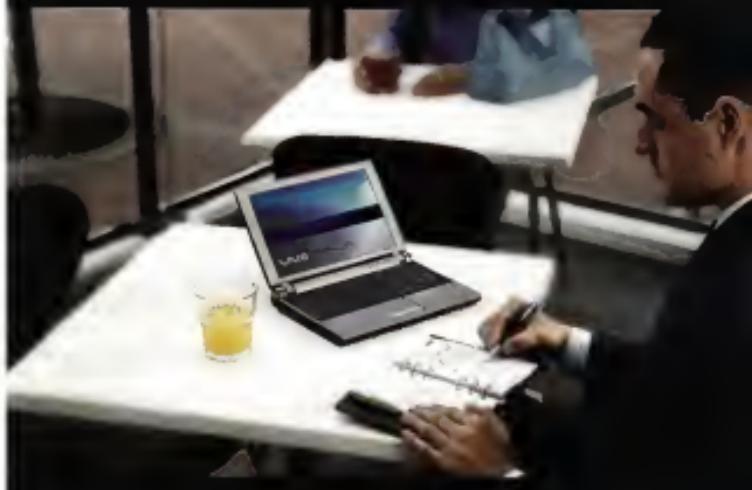
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# UPFRONT



## Homolka | Karla parts ways with her supposed helper

If the measure of a man is the company he keeps, Karla Lepointe is in serious need of personal growth. Lepointe's moves for her estranged killer Kelly Homolka at his modest hardware store in Langford, Que., are open to debate, but they appear to fall well short of altruistic. After obsessively chasing Homolka, claiming to want to help her return to life after 12 years in prison, he taped their conversations, then offered them to the media—some reparation for money At-a-Good-Summerman, he's a tough sell.

Still, she partly does even worse: might have done the country a favor, because what really matters is not Lepointe's circle of friends, but Homolka's. The courts, her violent family and Canadian oil have a stake in knowing the company kept by Paul Bernardo's partner-in-crime, given her usual past. The psychiatrist who examined her at her behalf in court hearings in July acknowledged her tendency for "bad relationship choices." And her defense to the murder of Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French was that she was Bernardo's compliant victim. Lepointe's allegations suggest the same insu-

Homolka and Lepointe at a cafe, before the media storm

bling pathology, that she's been evading trials for Jean-Paul Gobet, a convicted killer with whom she struck up a relationship behind bars; that she tried to persuade Lepointe to assist the fugitive son of murderer Steve Clemmons, another prison friend. Then there's Lepointe, himself, who seems set to have a criminal past and a fresh charge of sexual assault against him. You could almost feel the collective cringe in St. Catharines, Ont., when Lepointe suggested he might move to the city where Homolka and Bernardo committed their crimes—you know, out of "scruples" for an audience.

Homolka's own-ordered conditions forced her, among other things, from running with convicted criminals. And criminal records are public information in Quebec, meaning she or her lawyer could easily have checked her boss's rap sheet. It's all mixed the possibility that this much-better intervention in the Keltos saga will fail the French and (mostly) femalefied most devout with by leading Homolka back in jail. CHARLIE GILLS

## ScoreCard



**HIGH-TECH WRECK**  
For the other B.C. residents, heading Sea to Sky Highway to Whistler when cellphone chips, OnRamps ahead, water new limit message service from B.C. Ministry of Transport. You return eyes to road as car shifts. So much improved a dangerous thing.



**DOOMED**  
The fading of space experts meeting in Vancouver that the Earth is due for a major catastrophe like the one that wiped out the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, puts things in perspective. True, it will be a horrible death the likely, no reason to waste the rest of the summer painting the house.



**PAUL MARTIN**  
PM not quite ready yet to play hardball with U.S. over \$5 billion in tariffs used Canada in softwood lumber trade. He needs to make trade war, or even worse take? Like Rio 2 spot on Pat Robertson's hit list.



**QUEBEC**  
Quebec fails to take sole side of redwood timber dispute after decades of failing to be sold in quickly "white, fast, fine" colour. Quick policy change unlikely as pro-businessairy farmers known to greater political skills—and not with meagre.

**Quote of the week |** "If he thinks we're trying to assassinate him, I think we really ought to go ahead and do it." Christian Coalition head PAT ROBERTSON forgets the Sixth Commandment and urges the U.S. to kill leftist President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela One Inter apologize!

**IRAQIS** British favorite work is starting doubt on the theory that the two sets of train bombers who executed Londoners in July were linked to a sophisticated al-Qaeda puppet master who may have even set off the bombs from afar. In both cases, the devices used were self-destructing. And in the first attack, which killed 52 civilians, one of the bombers used their mobiles to call his accomplice—narrative bungling management—when his first target was closed because of a defective train.

**RANDOM** To free the "two Somalis"—aid workers known as Paul and Steven Vertes—who held hostage by Iraqi militants last year, the Balkan Red Cross struck four injured Muslim insurgents past the U.S. military to a flag-draped hospital. Also part of the deal known as the Abu Ghraib agreement—four Iraqi children with leukemia were brought to Italy for treatment.

**IRAQ** With sectarian violence rising, Shi'a and Suni negotiators made a last ditch attempt to include Sunni Muslims in the new constitution. But it now looks like the minority Sunnis, who were the backbone of Saddam Hussein's government all those

years, will try to defeat the plan in the Oct. 15 referendum. The sticking point is a proposal that would allow groups of protesters to congregate in a federal zone. The Sunnis, and many international observers, fear this would enable the Kurds in the north and Shi'is in the south—the two areas where oil is—to form their own groupings, leaving the Sunnis out of the country's wealth.

#### PIANO MAN



He's not Canada's McNaught after all. The 20-year-old who agreed to walk up on a British beach in April and reconstruct, for mouth-only breathing, a hospital piano, is a young German man, Andreas Gagné, from a farm near the Czech border. He was suffering a severe psychotic depression, his lawyer said. His published photo provoked hundreds of fibheads. One was that he was the mysterious man who turned up in Canada in 1999 and became an international celebrity after declaring he had no memory. He also had gone missing again.

**MIDDLE EAST** Israel completed its historic pullout of the Gaza Strip, but Prime Minister

Ariel Sharon said there would be no irreversible Palestinian reconciliation by dismantling in岐山 (Gaza) to expand the large Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank. Violence flared in the region as the Orthodox Jew was stabbed to death by a Palestinian in Jerusalem and Israeli security forces killed five Palestinians during anti-settlement protests in the West Bank. Adding to the tension, Israel announced it would extend its huge security wall about 25 km into the West Bank, encircling new suburbs surrounding Jerusalem, effectively cutting off the disputed city from Palestinian access.

**MOTHER NATURE** Another deadly hurricane, this one named Katrina, pounded storm-battered Florida leaving at least seven dead and over two million people without power.

In California, scorching days and the loss of a key transmission line forced power authorities to impose rolling power blackouts on the state, something Ontario hasn't done during its heat wave in July and August.

**CRASH** Fifty-nine passengers were killed and 39 passengers were confirmed dead—after a Peruvian jet crashed in the Amazon jungle during a fierce bad storm. With the jet crashes worldwide, August was the deadliest month for airline disasters in three years.



#### MOUNTAIN WATERS

Weeks of rain brought down mudslides, mud walls ready to collapse, stricken homes, collapsing ancient foundations and snarled roads. Communications like New-York City, in Germany, it was central Europe's worst flood in years. At least 10 people died and in France, the head-of-state, Jacques Chirac, reported visits of 100,000 to 150,000 residents in his home.

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# UPFRONT

## HEALTH

**BRAND GAIN** For the first time in over 35 years, more Canadian doctors returned home to practice than left for greater pasture abroad, the Canadian Institute for Health Information reported. It also found the number of doctors in Canada rose by five per cent between 2000 and 2004, keeping pace with population increases. But Canadian physicians are getting older on average, and the proportion of young doctors entering the system has been dropping.



### ALBATROSS

The story, apparently, is symbol of elements that have returned to us, of blues, who had helped build Al Fayed, who died tragic death in car crash in 2007. It is to be displayed in London while event by Prince's company following father

incigarette companies from advertising at sporting and cultural events. Tobacco companies are still banned from producing lifestyle ads like the ones used if a law can't stop biker garage from wearing their colours, who should be able to outlive my firm leading its name to a public event.

**SALMON** For the first time, there will be no commercial sockeye fishery on B.C.'s once abundant Fraser River, federal officials decided. Warming higher than usual ocean temperatures and overfishing in the past, only about five million salmon are returning this year, half as many as conservation authorities had expected.

training camp in Afghanistan. One of five Muslims held at a security risk, Charbonneau denies the charges and was released in February after four hearings, and several prominent Canadians put up money for bail. The test case involves Montrealer Adil Charkiewicz, a Moscovite held for 21 months on allegations he was once an al Qaeda

**TOBACCO AD** Quebec's Court of Appeal struck down part of a federal law prohibiting

BY MICHAEL D. ABREU



**MICHAELLE JEAN** The continuing controversy over whether the new governor general favored her Quebec appointment in the past seems to be taking a toll on her popularity. A new poll by Deonix Research saw support for Michaelle Jean's appointment plunge from 59 to 36 per cent over a one-week period. However 56 per cent said her personal qualifications shouldn't bar her from the job if she's nominated to Canada today.

**UKRAINIAN** In a fit of wartime fervour, Canada interned approximately 5,000 Ukrainian-Canadians during the First World War. Some were forced to do hard labour, and had their property confiscated. Describing it as "dark day in Canadian history," Paul Martin made a formal apology during a visit to Regina. Ottawa is offering \$25 million to the Ukrainian and other groups for memorials and educational exhibits.

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## Mansbridge on the Record



## VOODOO POLITICS

You know it's slow when pollsters start conjuring up leadership contests

**FROM** An end-of-summer reporter's note book:

• Two slow things are down in the polling business when resources start conjuring up leadership contests where there are none: A survey by work by SRS Research Associates for the Toronto Star plucked a variety of possible replacements for Paul Martin against each other. Is Martin going somewhere? Have I missed something during the CBC holiday? Those questions aside, there are two things I usually find interesting about the poll at this salvo: first, of those tested potential Martin successors, not one is a current member of the Prime Minister's cabinet. What does that say about the public's adulation, and the stability of, the men and women whom the PM has chosen to have around him? And second: two of the leading contenders are Frank McKenna and Bob Rae, who both have an uncertain job title of premier. (So does Bernadine Lobb, one of the leading gunners when pollsters ask questions about who could replace Stephen Harper.)

All right then. What in the mind, hands on your bosom for this very question: who was the last former premier to be successful in his bid for the office of prime minister? The answer doesn't exactly leap to mind, does it? You shouldn't feel bad—most premiers don't have blurbies on this one. You have to go back 109 years: Charles Tupper, the former premier of Nova Scotia, was the country's prime minister for 68 days in 1896. Not that others haven't tried since—the path to 24 Sussex is littered with the regurgitated remains of premiers past. That shouldn't

“  
Of the names touted as Martin's potential successor, not one is in his cabinet. What does that say about his ministers?

detest McKeown, Rae and Lobb. Or, for that matter, Martin, Charest, Harris and Klein.

• The latest trial balloon floated out of the Liberal pre-campaign war room didn't stay airborne long. It had the election being delayed, perhaps until the spring. The next winter elections, with all that snow, are apparently just too difficult. Let's remember the history here: Martin, in the depths of a parliamentary crisis last April, promised the country, in a televised address, that he would call an election within 30 days of the Gomery inquiry's final report. The government anchored a constitutional strategy that kept his government from being defeated.

Now, with the fiscal report looking like it'll be ready by mid-January, come these same numbers of election delay? I'm not sure how that tactic would have worked, although it was a strategy largely designed to rule out this possibility for the PM. “I know I presented your election within 30 days of Gomery, but guess what—it's too cold to keep that promise!” No wonder Martin's got the shadow of his dad, senator, hanging over him. He's got to make sure his campaign is not overshadowed—or—in 1993, Liberals and Conservatives bashed each other through the January and February blizzards. Expect a similar situation early in the New Year, unless the government is toppled this fall, which isn't impossible but is unlikely.

• A number of you have been asking me about the CBC's policies. I have no trouble acknowledging colleague Mark Staroselski's words in this magazine last week: This is an old battle at the post booth of an old culture, but it's never played out like this before. As a result, the sides have never been higher—the future of national public broadcasting may hang in the balance. One can only hope both sides fully appreciate that.

PHOTO: MANSBRIDGE IS Client Correspondent of CBC Television. Steve MacIntyre is author of the National To Comeback: What's Next for Canada.

## Passages

**DIED** To hockey players, he was Dr. Safety, the ophthalmologist who helped prevent the helmet and face protection after he was injured in a game in 1959. The long-standing chairman of the Canadian Standards Association committee for hockey and ice-snow equipment, Dr. Tom Paisley died at his Toronto home. He was 90.

**DIED** He was associate chief justice of the Federal Court of Canada for 18 years, until his retirement in 1998. But James Jerome is probably best remembered as the far-realed Liberal Speaker of the House of Commons (1974-80) during one of its more fractious eras—the collapse of the Trudeau Liberals and the election of Joe Clark's short-lived minority government. Jerome died in Ottawa at 72.

**TRADED** He was given three years probation for his role in the high-speed car crash in 2003 that took the life of interim Dan Snyder, and the Snyder family and most fans forgave him. But Doug Horley, 34, wanted a fast man and the Atlanta Thrashers obliged—they traded their star to the Ottawa Senators for forward Mikaëla Hossa, 26, and defenceman Greg de Vries, 32.

**ALIVE** Chuck Strahl, 46, a well-liked Conservative veteran and deputy Speaker of the Commons, told his constituents he has lung cancer, probably from asbestos exposure from his work as a logger 20 years ago. A man smolder, Strahl said the disease is in the lining of his lungs.

**RETURNING** Hardboiled and smoky, Michael Lemire, 58, was known as “the smoking woman's stripper” when he was a TV host in Britain. He's bound to raise ripples wagging now that he's coming home to Canada to teach at the University of Toronto. Many see him as a possible Liberal successor to Prime Minister Paul Martin.

## THE MACLEAN'S INTERVIEW



WILLIAM LEITH

THE MAN WHO  
ATE TOO MUCH

**WILLIAM LEITH** is 45 now, the sober, reasonably slim and very happy father of a four-month-old son, Billy. Not long ago, though, the French writer and journalist was a corpulent binger of everything from mashed potatoes to cocaine. He's also the author of *The Hungry Year: Confessions of a Food Addict* (Doubleday), a notoriously honest, often darkly comic memoir of an out of control life. It's a compelling story and why he used death and sex to end it—the way he did, hitting lowest when he was eight years old and moved to Canada for a year. Leith spoke to Maclean's Senior Writer Brian Bechonek.

## So what happened in Nova Scotia?

My problem was I'd been depleted from my earlier life, something I only realized when I was around 30 and my appetites went out of control. The food was tasty and fat-

tering, and I turned to it for comfort. If I'd ended up where the foot was bad or scared, maybe I would have become anorexic.

Do you mean that food comes, in some sense, a child's concern?

Addictions begin as a need to block something your mind thinks is worse. People who have trouble with food, often their problems go very far back in their lives. When you're a child and you're trying to decide the point, what else can you turn to?

Can you compare your addictions in the house? They did you eat, how hard they were to quit? My nose immediately dangers any problem was drink. Large drinking can really damage you physically very quickly—cocaine and binge eating are slower in their effects.

You never internal damage or like that when you passed out but it's a shock of it?

There are better ways to pass out into CDs. CDs are sharp, they're sharp and they cut your face. Overeating causes more subtle psychological damage, and it's very hard to kick, partly because it doesn't seem so bad—soothsayers besides, who like, if you keep away from the world of suppliers and users, you can ignore it. With alcohol, it's a bit harder, but how do you keep away from food? It's like telling a smoker that he has to quit—except for the three or four cigarettes a day he needs to stay alive.

At one point you were convinced that carbohydrates were evil incarnate. What do you think now?

I'm a bit calmer about them. Now that I know my problem isn't just what I'm eating, but how I'm eating. I'm no longer want to eat carbohydrates. I still avoid them. Most likely I'll live at the gym yesterday. But the thing is my head that says, “You're sorry if you eat them all,” is even stronger than the part of that says “more, more.”

You're optimistic about yourself, but are you less so about what many are calling an obesity crisis in the Western world?

Getting fat—it's in the genes. In a way, it's the system. There's something fundamentally wrong with us. We can't seem to cope with abundance, our eating patterns by creating false needs. We're full, yet empty, tired, but hungry. We will want more.

## RIDING TO THE RESCUE

After that incident with the vest, Harper's handlers strive to revive his image

**HOW BIG A MEDIA** buy would it take voters forgetting about a political坐着，a too-tough leather cowboy vest? This was the unspoken question that hung over the air as the Conservatives launched a series of four new TV commercials aimed at getting Stephen Harper's message across before the House resumes sitting on Sept. 27. The plan, which began running last week mainly in vote-rich Ontario, aims to reinforce the Blackwood Hat Kid as the strong yet sensitive leader of a powerful, multicultural team. They hope that's all to gain down the Liberal in an election expected early next year. It's a perilous undertaking to try to glean useful information about a party's strategy from a single ad campaign, but in this case the signals seem clear, and no one seems to argue.

The timing of the ad offensive is critical. Harper has earned a measure of measurable popularity, symbolized by the widespread masking of his appearance in ill-fitting western wear at the Calgary Stampede. So annoyed are his handles at pundits who say Harper sounds the manner Epping burgers that his office recently issued a press release sounding new release ("apparently, some commentators have taken the name ..."). It serves him well. In more substantial speeches and meetings, jazz whiz-attending to Harper's blustered image, though, is evident he had lost a sense of being miles in recent months. Then, in mid-August, his chief of staff, Phil Murphy, exited suddenly. Power vacuums are hard to shake off. Doug

**THE** Conservatives appear to have accepted poll evidence that the sponsorship scandal is no longer a top-of-mind issue



The teacher with Ambrose (left) and Guangguo (right) accepting their new roles as child care

his recommendations for policy changes are to follow in December. Prime Minister Paul Martin has promised to call an election within 30 days of that final report, which means Canadians might be called to the polls in February. But rather than ensuring an election triggered by a joltic into motion, it will be about that scandal, the Tories are hedging their bets with the new ads, trying to build up their credibility on other other files.

The ads are all in the same style. Hand-held cameras steadily follow the go-and-sing as Harper walks polly with some of his most religious MPs. The setting is a smoke-filled constituency office, and the atmosphere is one of faux informality, obviously scripted. While politicians are performers of a sort, all ads remind us that's not the name in being a saint. Playing display talents that rise to show the level achieved in these home equity loan ads, they are as sanctified as St. Peter himself.

they are not working with deathless lines "Hey, Jack," Harper calls out to MP Jim Prentice in one exchange. "How long have the Liberals been in power?" "Beggar's seam,"



Prottka responds bluntly: It's not clear if Harper is too tough here, or if the idea is

of mundane fact and figures. At another point, Deputy Leader Peter MacKay seems on the verge of cracking up, Semifrid-style, as he bemoans Liberal health policy

If the dialogue is weak, the scenes might still get across a few key messages. Harper is presented throughout as a tenacious, not the isolated figure he's often portrayed as

so that was never meant to prevent him from ever approachable. But SES President Niki Benson says that tactic risked eroding his reputation for seriousness, which, if packaged properly, ought to be a key asset. "He's recognized as thoughtful, articulate and intelligent, and yet people seem him handling our fast-food counter and flipping hot burgers," Benson says. "They shouldn't dress him up and make him be something that he's not."

The ads place Harper in a context that should fit better with pronouncements and accusations of him: policy gap bashing over policies. But are these the right ones to be highlighting? Nixon argues that the Tories should play to their strengths. "You have to stick with what works," he says. "For any Conservative leader, it has to be about fiscal issues and taxes and the economy." Only one of the ads, a pitch for lower taxes, hits a Tory sweet spot. The others—on health, child care and immigration—are all those issues on which the Conservatives might face more voter suspicion. "Those issues that are outside of your franchise are issues no neutrals," Nixon says. "They are not issues that are going to fire up your core vote and swing voters to you."

Apparently, Harper doesn't see it that way. The ads take on the Liberals' traditional social-policy turf. He's shown discussing child care with two young female MPs, René Arnoux and Helene Guérat. They promise more parental choice than the Liberal daycare policy. In the bathrobe, Harper shows the Liberal task force on wait times, and reiterates that the public system is "the only one that my family has ever used." In case you missed it, that's an allusion to the fact that Paul Martin's physician can offer, along with publicly covered non-renewable medical coverage.

The ads are vague on the specifics of the coming threelaw. Their success depends on whether the Ontario singer and ex-boyfriend of a Hager who now represents himself with a hip-looking group of MPs—John Baird, Queen's University teacher and researcher on political advertising, experts warn to be on guard. "The use of female MPs and young MPs in the ads is such an obvious attempt to refine the party message that would appeal to younger people," Baird says. On the other hand, with the cowboy vote extremely low, Blaney needs to reach out for new supporters somewhere.

# CBC'S SPLIT PERSONALITY

The network never solved its identity crisis: Is it offering a service or selling a product?



IT WAS THE SECOND DAY of the CBC's fallouts when the network's most recognizable face was asked to put all in perspective. Just back from his coverage, and still with a couple of days' stubble on his face, news anchor Peter Mansbridge stepped up to explain the forces that had brought the public broadcaster to a virtual standstill.

"What's at stake in the future of public broadcasting," he told reporters. "We have a vision, people walking around this building, and they have a

vision inside, and somehow those two visions have to meet." It was vintage analysis from a man who's made a career presenting measured commentary on major crises around the world. The linchpin is the proliferation of content workers, with few benefits and no job security, that the CBC is increasingly relying upon to keep the spending controls on the air. But the danger, he explained, is philosophical, not technical:

Mansbridge's balanced journalism was only half-right. The future of public broadcasting may well be at stake, and it nobody doubts that the positions on each side are based on ideology. But the dispute at the heart of the CBC's work stagegate is not based on the collision of two competing visions. It's the product of a single, fundamentally contradictory vision, ingrained in the CBC's culture: a mission statement shared by all, grasped by none.

Management and users are almost indistinguishable when they talk about the value of public broadcasting, and CBC's need to "reflect Canada to Canadians." But beneath these words there is a basic inconsistency that has never been resolved in the CBC's public service, or in its competitive media outlet. That inchoate personality—between the values of informed and civic public service—has created three distinct worlds under the CBC banner. First, there's the stable news and current affairs operation,

then there's the highly profitable but culturally irrelevant programming like pro sports and imported serials. Then there's the eternally losing CBC Third World—primarily money-losing mass entertainment shows. This uneasy coexistence has held for a generation. But now that the CBC's audience is being torn away by an ever-expanding range of choices on the dial, the condition is deteriorating as suddenly.

You can blame this, in part, on Brian Mulroney. After slashing the CBC's budget in the 1980s, the Mulroney Conservatives passed a new 3-revolving Act in 1991. But rather than clearly spelling out the goals and parameters of the national broadcaster,

## RATHER than clearly spelling out the goals of the CBC, the government opted for a mushy catch-all mission statement

the government opted for a mushy catch-all mission statement, built on the omnibus mandate of presenting "a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains." The specifics included the need to "actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression." It was a mandate that could mean anything,



and so, it ended up meaning nothing.

Under successive premiers—Gérard Pelletier, Tony Mazzoni, and Perrin Beatty—the CBC was a mix of big-budget news, current affairs and documentary showstoppers, supplemented by an ever-enveloping lineup of prime time dramas and comedies. And, of course, there were the lucrative sports franchises like Hockey Night in Canada to help pay the bills. But by the late 1990s, when faced with licence renewal hearings before the CRTC, the CBC's masters came under pressure again to define what the CBC offered that the private sector could not.

Beatty, the ex-Mulroney culture minister and then-president of the network, responded with a staunch defence of the CBC's "anything-and-everything" approach. He pointed to the theme of cultural sovereignty, and repeatedly presented his research in the loose bulkwork against an onslaught of mindless American slyles infecting the Canadian airwaves. To those who urged the CBC to narrow its focus, and to shun commercial stuff

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"We reject the argument that we should become an elite service that forgoes general programming and concentrates only on what the commercial sector does not want," he told an audience of journalists and politicians in June 1999, near the end of his tenure. "That is not only a shortsighted but also potentially perilous venture. Nothing should be beyond the CBC's stage of existence." And so, nothing was.

But as the winds were shifting, and with a new man at the helm, there were signs for fundamental change. In May 2000, new CEO Robert Rubenovitch firmly acknowledged the CBC was broken. "We have two fundamental problems: a financial crisis in the short term and an identity crisis in the long term," he told the Canadian standing committee on Canadian heritage. "If the

CBC were a private sector company I would say it was structurally flawed and unless it addressed these structural problems it would be certain to bankruptcy." What did Rubenovitch unveil? A new strategy that emphasized distinctiveness over competition, and a public service over commercial mediacy. The CBC had for too long been a mishmash of light entertainment and service-oriented programs without a unifying value. He proposed to build the CBC into a distinctive "public service brand" and one of his first innovations was to trim the amount of advertising on *The National's* newscasts.

Suddenly a wasp was for CBC managers to admit that they believed network had deep and systemic problems. In October of last year, Gordian Sasseur, who was nearing the end of his term as chair of the CBC's board of directors, told a management conference in Montreal that CBC's attempt at preann-

ting management of a public service institution had created "an intrinsic difficulty, which we have not yet solved."

"How," she asked, "do we check whether results have been achieved if we are not even unanimous in our definition of success?" In the private sector, success means rising profits, market expansion and return on investment. But how should a public broadcaster be judged? On ratings? Awards? "Should an upscale production that wins several international prizes but soon out to be cost-effective be regarded as a success or a failure?" Whether she realized it or not, Sasseur had put the finger on the issue that plagued the CBC for decades, eroding morale and fueling public cynicism. Unfortunately, the CBC would never get any closer to solving the problem.



## CBC TV's Point Man

**Richard Stenberg, executive vice president of CBC Television, at the network's point man ends ongoing dispute with senior staff.** Last week, he spoke with Maclean's Senior Editor Steve Maclellan about where at the heart of the mess, and what's at stake for the broadcaster.

### Why is this issue of contract labour so critical to the CBC?

This is the most important cultural institution in the country. We've been working very hard over the course of the last little while to try to show that the CBC is in a position to be successful in the most difficult broadcasting environment in the world. If you're making a show, you hire the producers and directors and put them under contract for the life of the show. If that show doesn't work, these contracts are over the same time as the show, and you can move on to the next thing. It is so important that we get the best possible talent and the best possible fit between talent and program requirements.

### How long can the CBC go on as it is?

Well, CBC Radio is obviously a completely at-risk entity. And the studios are extremely lean, so they are going to come back, I think, as soon as radio is back up again. As far as television is concerned, it is a slightly more difficult business because there is a level of competition in television

that is much more severe. But, while it is obviously difficult, meanwhile it is not doing anybody any good. I think that when people see what's available when we finally get back on the air, they'll be enormously attracted and we will be able to recover significant share.

### Even if this stretches on for months?

I don't think it's going to stretch on. That would seem to me most unfortunate and most unlikely. I hope it is going to be concluded in the next two or three weeks. It seems to me there's a contradiction underlying this dispute that has to do with needs to fit CBC a public service or a competitive media outlet?

It's a public service, but let me put it to you this way: you can't have a public service without a public. The one area where Canadians have not done well is in entertainment programming. One of the things we're working on is to see if it's possible to create great entertainment that will really easily resonate with Canadians. We think that's a profoundly important cultural endeavour...some people will say it's a contradiction between being a public broadcaster and looking for an audience, but I don't think so. I think they're the same.

What about just leaving on public-service news, current affairs, documentaries and niche arts programming?

Well, we can agree with that. This is the most important medium in the world, and what people watch more than anything else is entertainment programming. We would be seeing in enormous part of our cultural life by simply saying "we can't do it" if it has been done, it can be done.

### Why not go to the CBC Radio model and remove commercial advertising?

That would be great except, if you do that, our ability to finance news and comedy and drama would diminish in an important way. I don't think there's anything inconsistent about raising programming that's terribly popular and making it appropriate that editors like Gaila. I think that's a false dichotomy. If you focus things that are successful and distinctly Canadian, people will watch at large numbers. I reject the idea that there's a choice to be made between what's broadly popular and what matters culturally.

had slipped back into his message. Field reversed, like Harry, to talking instead about providing an "essential public service" that competes in a "challenging market," while ensuring the new "standards of efficiency" aggressive networks. He pledged to "squeeze maximum value out of operations and investments" without ever exploring how a public broadcaster could measure "value" when costs exceed revenue by \$900 million a year. He and the CBC "needed to make our network more distinctive and less commercial" but went on to say the network was "open for business."

"Let me be clear here," he said. "Advertising has a vital place on CBC schedules. Ad revenues remain vital to our success." He brought along a campaign on *Mystery Night in Canada for Home Depot*, at which viewers were invited to send in pictures of their backyard radios—an ingenious cross-promotion exercise that any private network exec would be proud of. So much for Canada's "public service brand."

Despite all the talk of developing distinctive programming in the neglected corners of Canadian culture, the CBC has largely stuck in its long history of copycat programming. *Roseanne*'s repeat may have provided the CBC's programmers in the U.S., but when the BBC had success with *Antiques Roadshow*, the CBC copied its own version. And all the lawyer shows or *American* newscasters like *Ally McBeal* and *The Practice*, the CBC presented *This is Wonderland*. When reality TV was big, and with CBC pulling huge ratings with *Canada's Idol*, CBC came up with *Making the Cut*, brought to you by Bell Canada.

Some of this programming is arguably pretty good, but it's hard to see how any of it was aimed at fostering Canadian culture. It's even more difficult to figure how a show like *Die Hard*'s (agent 00s) is used that wasn't already standing in TV's *Cold Squad*, or Global Television's police serial *Blue Moon*. It gets even more difficult to fathom when you know that every episode of *Die Hard* costs about \$1 million to produce but attracts less than \$100,000 in ad revenue. And perhaps it's best not to even try justifying the daily offering of the British soap *Coronation Street*—in particular, no less

It might be defensible if the CBC's commercial model were working, but it isn't. In 1998, the network had an revenue of \$383.3



On *100 Years*, expect to see some of the CBC's prime-time stalwarts. Executives estimate it costs about \$4 million per episode to produce, and attracts less than \$100,000 in advertising.

million. In 2004, that had shrunk to \$38.3 million—a drop of 26 per cent. And when 2005 figures are released, they'll be even worse, because the CBC lost its most lucrative ad generator when the NHL lockout killed the hockey season. The network's government funding, meanwhile, has fallen from \$702 million to \$533 million over the same period. But rather than encouraging the network to get more distinctive, less commercial and to break away from a culture of cut-throat competition for mass audiences, the slide in revenue seems to have hardened the CBC's resolve to cling to its few money-makers, and its obsession with keepng gate down—by putting even more on temporary and contract labour, for example.

The network is producing some dramatic shows that arguably fit with a public service enterprise, like the historical drama *Sainted City*, about the 1917 Halifax explosion. But even those projects developed within an off-the-radar commercial unit, *Canada: A People's History*, for example, was a huge critical and ratings success. But many within the CBC questioned whether the decision of the series because of its \$23-million price tag and lack of corporate sponsorship. Only after over 80 million people tuned in did the network's brass trust pat their selves on the back for "taking a risk" on

such a bold and important piece of work. Such how they hold to the notion that *A People's History* was a risk, but coming out *After Earth* year after year is just mere programming.

It's time for the CBC to finally realize the identity crisis that Rabenbach identified five years ago. Dump the big-money吸纳 and the biggest-money losers, and focus on the true public-service elements in business. That's the recipe that turned CBC Radio from a relic into the thriving operation it is today. There would still be room, and money, to produce specials like *Trudeau*, *A People's History* and even a few topical shows like *the Blue Marlin Report*. But there would be no more going into failed commercial projects, and no more neglecting the news rooms to accommodate the NHL playoffs. At least, the CBC would be focused, stable and resurgent.

Monaghan and many others at the CBC may think the two sides in this dispute need only find common ground and reach a truce on contract work, but that load of thinking is what got them into this mess in the first place. One viewer must win our decidedly red and green flag. Does the CBC offer a service or a product? Any deal that leaves that question unresolved is just an affirmation of the dysfunctional status quo.

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**MACLEAN'S** **100**

**ROGERS**  
THE ROGERS CONNECTION

# A TIME TO DIE

Is the Dutch model of euthanasia—even for infants—the solution when suffering can't be relieved?

**KAREN KNOTTEREBELT** was 33 when she found out her father, Hans, was going to die. He had been diagnosed with ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease. They both knew that slowly the nerves affecting his muscles would deteriorate until he was almost paralyzed. First he would lose his ability to walk, then to sit up by himself, speak and swallow. Eventually he would die by suffocation. But his mind would remain intact and he would be fully aware of what was happening to him.

A few years went by and the disease took its inevitable course. Hans held on to his old

life in the Netherlands as much as he could. He rose his friends to play bridge although he could no longer hold his cards, he went to parties and held his drink even when he could barely swallow. But eventually, he was confined to a bed or a chair. Nights were the most difficult time. Hans could lie still for one or two hours. But then friends would accompany him to the toilet, in a horrifying foreshadowing of how he knew he would die, he would struggle for breath, bleeding at an alien bell beside him that would wake his wife or one of his children to come and clear his airway.

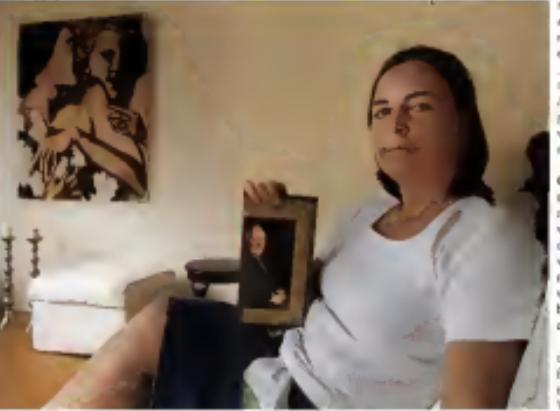
"My Dad woke up in the evenings like a scared rabbit," Karen recalls. "He was so scared. Not scared of dying, but scared of suffocation, of the way he would die. The worst thing was that you could see someone who you love so dearly, that's a full grown-up, with fear in their eyes because they can't breathe anymore, because they can't get the oxygen that you need in your body. That born so young."

Hans and Karen cohosted a charity for hundreds of Canadians last year. They knew Hans would die soon, and they could hope and pray for us in my death, or maybe even a heart attack. But doctors told them this would not happen, and deep down they knew this, too. So, 807, Hans was euthanized by

life in the Netherlands. So there was another option open to him.

Euthanasia is permitted in Holland if certain conditions are met—most notably if the patient is requesting it, and if the doctor who ends the patient's life and at least one other physician with no connection to the case are convinced the suffering is unbearable and that there is no hope for improvement. Hans decided he wanted to choose how and when he would die. His doctor agreed to help. Other physicians were consulted and Hans was asked repeatedly if he was sure this was what he wanted. He said it was.

Hans's pain and fear reached a point where he felt he couldn't face suffocating death. One day he told his family, "You disliked me." His beloved son gathered around him one last time. His wife was there, as was Karen, his brother and his sister-in-law. Hans was propped up in a chair and the rest of the family gathered together. "He told us he hoped we would have many more stories like that," Karen says. "I don't think any of us could really grasp what was going to happen. You know that at that point it is the last time you have together, but you don't do anything special, because in the course of these years everything is already said. My dad knew what we wanted out of



life. And he had already told us everything that he wanted us to know about him and about what he wished for us."

After dinner the doctor asked Hans where he would like to die. The doctor put his lethal sedatives in a different room so Hans would not need to see them. Hans hugged his wife and his children and lay

down in his bed. The doctor put sedative into his feeding tube, then added a drug to stop his heart. "I think it's one of the most beautiful things I've seen in my life—someone you love so dearly pass away so peacefully," Karen says. "The most special moment was the way my dad lay on the bed and he could see my mom and me and

Knottterebelt (left) calls her father's assisted suicide "beautiful, a massive demonstration against euthanasia in Holland in 2001."

my brother and my sister-in-law. And he looked at us with such gentle eyes and such a thankful way. He was at us. And he was actually smiling."

**CANADIANS** suffering from a similar condition as Hans's have no legal option to die in the same way euthanasia is legal in Canada, as it is in most parts of the world. Holland, however, is the most permissive country in Europe when it comes to euthanasia. It has been legal there, under certain conditions, since 2002.

The law permits adults to choose death over continued treatment for terminal and painful conditions. Between 2002 and Edouard Verhagen, clinical director of the department of pediatrics at the University Medical Centre in the Dutch city of Groningen, some patients whose suffering doctors believe to be relieved by death cannot die.

He's referring to infants.

Last fall the Groningen hospital published the fact that in 2003 it had drawn up a protocol, in consultation with the Dutch government's office, that specified when a suffering infant might be killed by a doctor. Among other conditions, the baby must have an incurable illness, its suffering must be unbearable, and both parents must give consent. The hospital also disclosed that, since implementing the protocol, it has ended the lives of five sick infants. In total, 23 cases involving infants in Holland have been reported to the Dutch district attorney's office by various hospitals in the past seven years.

When this news was made public, Verhagen, a pleasant and soft-spoken father in his early 40s, was flooded with hate mail and critical letters from all over the world. Many compared him to Nazi. A former Republican congressman, Bob Barr, wrote

in the Washington Times, "We're attempting to escape Alfred's justice today; Dr. Joseph Mengele, the Nazi Angel of Death, would not have to make his way to the jungles of Brazil, the Netherlands would probably welcome him with open arms. It's the new Dutch Trail."

Reunited after compassionate while sitting in his sun-filled office, surrounded by children's paintings, Verhagen smiles thinly and kicks a foot under his desk like an adolescent. He's heard all this before and says he doesn't take it personally. But it clearly upsets him. Verhagen says the lives of severely ill and suffering infants are routinely ended by doctors all over the world. He was simply trying to drag a hidden preference into the open so it can be properly reviewed and regulated.

"There is a practice in the Netherlands. This is a practice worldwide," he says. "I think one of the main questions for every country is, if you have a hidden practice of euthanasia in adults, or the screwing up of lives in children, what is your approach to

## PEOPLE in Holland have been forced to talk about deliberately ending the lives of suffering newborns

that?" Are you going to leave it because it's hidden? Or are you going to regulate? What's a typical Dutch is that we try to regulate it. We try to regulate it by making a system that works, so we get these hidden cases to the surface."

In this case Verhagen has only partially succeeded. People have been forced to talk about deliberately ending the lives of suffering newborns, and no doctor who has followed the craze set out in the so-called Groningen protocol has been prosecuted. On the other hand, Verhagen estimates that 80 percent of cases in which a doctor ends the life of a suffering child are not reported. And killing an infant, no matter how sick and no matter how much that child is suffering, is still technically illegal.

Verhagen was never driven solely by a desire to clear up messy legal regulations. Four years ago, he was approached by distraught parents whose baby had a rare and horrifying skin disease and was in a lot of

pain. Her skin slid off when touched. She had no chance of living very long. The parents wanted to end her pain, even if that meant ending her life.

Verhagen and his team of doctors did all they could to confirm that the child was suffering with no chance of relief, but they also approached the local prosecutor, who informed them that he could not guarantee they would not be charged with murder if they ended the child's life. Verhagen felt he had no choice but to refine the parents' request. Their child died, presumably in great pain, some six months later. "This did not feel very good," Verhagen says. "We had the idea that we had not delivered the best care for this child."

Today, Verhagen does not need to face the same dilemmas, nor do the Dutch parents of children who are dying in pain—they can rest assured they won't be prosecuted if they follow the protocol. This is just to say the process is easy—it's emotionally gut-wrenching for everyone involved. "Can you imagine such a situation that parents come to you asking for the death of their child?" Verhagen says. "This is really unbelievable. But it happens. And it shows more or less how severe the suffering is. It's terrible to witness it."

If there is any solace in the process, Verhagen says it can be found, for doctors and parents alike, at the moment of a suffering infant's death. "What you see happen," he says, "is children who were up to that moment time and time again very unhappy, you see them crying quiet and peaceful, and they fall asleep. You see it in their faces. Their muscle tone changes. They fall asleep, and gradually they stop breathing."

**POLLS SUGGEST** there is wide support in Holland for euthanasia and for ending the lives of suffering infants. But among opponents such as Bert Dorenbos, president of the Dutch Christian anti-euthanasia group Cry for Life, says taking someone, regardless of how much pain they see in, is dehumanizing. His office in an Amsterdam suburb is filled with books about the Holy Land, small wooden statues of young married women, and Israeli flags. He leans across a large wooden table to emphasize his point. "Noboby," he says, "should have the right to inflict suffering on life because of nature."

Dorenbos is appalled by the explosions



Verhagen acted after learning he could be charged with murder for ending a child's life

but fears the so-called slippery slope: the idea of euthanizing the sick and terminally ill will open the door to doctor-assisted suicide for those who are healthy. In Holland, these are not permitted laws. Right to Die Netherlands is a large and well-funded pro-euthanasia lobby group. Its chief executive officer, Rob Jonquiere, believes that those who are not rich but who "auther [sic]" should also have the right to end their own lives with the help of a doctor.

He says there are people, usually elderly and lonely, who are not rich but who see no point in continuing to live. Their friends and relatives have died and they think that is no part of their own lives getting better. "These people are not psychotically ill, but they have that wish," Jonquiere says. "The reason for the suffering is not important; it's the suffering that is important. In a sense, a person who suffers from life can suffer as much as a person who suffers in life because of nature."

Dorenbos is appalled by the explosions

"when someone has a problem with their life,

we should not solve the problem or ease the problem by killing the person, but be full of misery," he says. Dorenbos blames the widespread acceptance of euthanasia and abortion in Holland on the country's liberalization, but he also takes support for euthanasia to the Dutch tradition of tolerance. "We have been a tolerance country through the years. We have been a country of review," he says. "So we find, okay, abortion—yeah, people should have the right to abort a child. Free sex, free drugs, free euthanasia—from a tolerant society. And now we have become intolerant of evil."

Jonquiere also thinks there is something intrinsically Dutch about supporting euthanasia. He looks to the Dutch concept of *geluk*, which he says roughly translates as tolerance of even legally dubious practices, as long as they can be morally justified. The Dutch may ignore problems, he says, they don't fight them. For Jonquiere, Holland's canal system is a metaphor for Dutch culture—it doesn't try to stop the water flooding in from France and Germany; it allows it to flow down to sea.

Bert Dorenbos and Jonquiere may have a point. While a few other countries permit



Karen and Hans Korthorst at their last family dinner before he ended his life

intensive-care units of a major Canadian teaching hospital who asked that her rail service be used, explains that morphine is often used to ease the pain of dysentery. "You use them struggle in bed, and you just give them more morphine as needed to keep them comfortable," she says. "But the more morphine you give, the more their respiratory system comes to a standstill, and eventually you reach a nose dive."

It's once the morphine that kills the patient directly, the adds, acting caustically that this would be legal. But in releasing the body, the drug can weaken the patient's ability to breathe in enough oxygen. The body then stops fighting a losing battle. The majority of Joanne's patients in the intensive-care unit are elderly and not destined to live the hospital alive. Every day she confronts difficult, sometimes heartbreaking, choices about when a patient's quality of life has diminished to such a level it is no longer worth intervening radically to keep that patient alive.

What botham her must is seeing these decisions play out from the patient themselves. They might be able to refuse certain treatments, or decide to leave the hospital to die at home. But rarely can they decide exactly how and when they want to die. "I find often that people want to have guilty feelings about leaving their loved ones go," she writes in an email a day or two after we first talk. "They ask us to continue treating a condition, when we know it's futile. Patients often need time to come to terms with the family member's illness, and so we continue to give them time to cope with the inevitable outcome."

"Ethics of my cases who died of multiple sclerosis," Joanne continues, "or anyone, for that matter, who is dying of an incurable illness. What they want is time to stir their final goodbyes to everyone. Once that has been done, and everyone is at peace and ready to let the person go, why could we not allow an intensivist to simply give a dose now of a general anaesthetic, and allow the person to easily go into a deep sleep and pass away? That seems so much more humane to me than watching people linger on for days, sometimes weeks. Death is a natural part of life. We need to embrace it and come to terms with it."

## VERHAGEN has dozens of letters from people whose relatives were unofficially euthanized decades ago

broken poverty from the window of neuroticistic self talk. But can one be found on the cobblestone streets, which are overflowing with young and old on bicycles adorned with bells and wicker baskets.

Coffee shops openly peddle some 16 different breeds of marijuana. That's a point where lights up a joint in a nearby night club is released by the manager for breaking the rules—drugs smoking's not allowed there. It's an approach to life that has less easily with

some Dutch citizens than others. "It looks like a beautiful city," says my cab driver, David, who was born in Turkey and says he is considering moving back there to raise his kids. "But it's also the worst in Europe for a lot of bad things—prostitution, drugs. If you lose your way here, you may never find it again."

**VERHAGEN SAYS** that after he was published, in addition to the hate mail and criticism, he received dozens of letters and emails from people whose relatives were unofficially euthanized decades ago by willing doctors. He was even contacted by a woman who had killed their own severely sick and disabled children. She says both groups told her the most difficult thing was the shame that prevented them from talking about their loss. They couldn't grieve, because they couldn't tell anyone what had happened.

It is almost certain that euthanasia is an option officially practiced in Canada, as well. Those involved face the same fear and shame. Indeed, the line between euthanasia and palliative care is often blurry. "Jaime," a resident physician in the

# 'WE ARE KILLING'

Experts say Canadian children are dying as a result of increased morphine doses

**CANADIAN EUTHANASIA** advocates in general shy away from the question. But it's clear that the wrenching debate over the mercy killing of infants that has gripped the Netherlands may soon erupt in Canada. We've already experienced something similar: the case of Sisalot, the woman Robert Latimer, who killed his severely disabled daughter Tracy, 13, in 1993 and was ultimately sent to prison for 10 years. And health care insiders have

long acknowledged that, while euthanasia remains illegal here, the lives of terminally ill and suffering adults are being quietly but routinely ended. Now, some are saying that it's also happening to infants and children. "It's occurring at an alarmingly rapid rate," says Etienne Klugé, a philosophy professor at the University of Victoria who specializes in medical ethics. "Of course it's not pause, because we are giving morphine analgesics—so in fact we are killing. But it is professionally and ethically appropriate under these rare circumstances."

Often, the deaths are the result of morphine. Klugé says that even if others deny that what's happening is actually a deliberate act of killing, it's clear that there's a grey area in Canadian medical ethics. "If you decide the child is in great discomfort, and we're going to double the dose of morphine without carefully increasing it incrementally, that would probably be interpreted as having the intention to end the child's life. It would be inappropriate," says Christiane Hammann, director of the bioethics department at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. But larger and larger doses of morphine are carefully administered, she adds, "with the intention of relieving discomfort in the child—and that plan may or may not result in the child passing away a little bit earlier than they might otherwise have done—she's seen as morally acceptable."

One nurse at a large hospital who works with critically ill children said, "I don't think anyone's killing anything—that's out in the open. There's no reason for a child to suffer." The nurse, who asked to remain anonymous, called for protocols developed with child euthanasia. That's where the debate would come in—and it promises to be explosive. It



Latimer, holding Tracy, is in prison for ending the life of his severely disabled daughter

would include issues such as that of Ruth von Frisch, spokesperson for the Transformed Right to the Society of Councils, who isn't afraid to support euthanasia for disabled kids. "There is no age limit on the ability to suffer." It would also call to the few pro-life groups, who reacted angrily to the resolution in the Netherlands. And it would also feature prominent figures from the medical community, such as Dr. Paul

**'THIS IS out in the open,' says one nurse, calling for regulation.**  
**There is no need for a child to suffer'**

Thiessen, a Vancouver pediatrician and director of the spinal bifida program at British Columbia's Children's Hospital in Vancouver.

Noting that many of the euthanized infants in the Netherlands suffered from spina bifida, Thiessen says the issue of euthanasia is "something we feel pretty sensitively about." While children with spina bifida have more quality of life issues, he says, they rarely suffer pain—and he's "never had a parent ask us if we know they want their child euthanized." Of Dutch infants with spina bifida being euthanized, Thiessen says, "what about all those other kids with severe newborn deformities? You're definitely on a slippery slope."

For now, though, the issue is out of the public eye in Canada. And in Ontario, euthanasia in general, never mind the specific question of infants, remains a touchy subject. Last fall, in the wake of a number of high-profile assisted-suicide cases, Justice Minister Irwin Cotler suggested that Ontario might need to look more closely at the issue. Last week, his director of communications tried to defuse what that meant. "When the minister mentioned a role for parliamentary debate, he was talking about a 'tacit' note debate," said Daniel Radulovic. "For lack of a better word, it's like a committee [that] can take on an issue and thrash it out in a debate, but there's no vote." And he added that, as of now, there is no Justice Department initiative to dispense such a debate.

Others say it's desperately needed. Klugé, for one, believes the law needs to be changed, to acknowledge the reality that exists in many Canadian hospitals and to prevent doctors and nurses "Strictly speaking, if the Criminal Code were to be enforced, any time a child is allowed to die and is suffering in comed with appropriate medication, that would constitute homicide. The medical practice is to end up at the threat of possible prosecution."

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# BOSTON PIZZA PARTY

A chain that began in Edmonton rules the burbs

**AH, EDMONTON.** You've given Canadians so much! The Gretzky era. Oilers. The West Edmonton Mall... . Boston Pizza. That's right, Boston Pizza. The name may sound as New England as the Kennedys, and down shower, but its origins are actually as Albertans as eagle and cradle. And like its native province, Boston Pizza's on a roll.

Gus Aguirre, the company's founder, came to Canada in 1958 as a soldier who jumped ship in Vancouver with only the clothes on his back and \$50 in his pocket. He chose Canada because it had "a good reputation as being soft with refugee types like me," he says. After four years working at various jobs for up to 20 hours a day, Gus opened the Boston Pizza and Spaghetti House in Edmonton in 1964. He says he settled on that tag for the simple reason that the flame of the pizzas had red Sox written on it. As Aguirre once put it, his team was "a Canadian company with an American name operated by Greeks serving Italian food."

The combinatorics worked like a charm. By the time he retired in 1978, the business had grossed 104 restaurants across Western Canada. It was the company's very success, however, that had made Aguirre realize it was time to move on. "It was a good thing we sold it," he says. "Now I could do a better job." In 1983, long-time franchisees Jim Thielong and George McWhirter found investors willing to put up the \$3.6 million needed to take over the company. By 1995,



Edmonton-area franchisee Clayton Williams  
compares from rival food outlets

selling, only profit in what the company had become. "It's my creation, like a kid," he boasts. "You always love your kid."

And there's plenty to love with over 200 outlets nationwide, Boston Pizza now ranks itself as the largest casual sit-down dining chain in the country, bigger even than Swiss Chalet. The company's roots may be firmly in the West (its main headquarters are in Red Deer, B.C.), but much of the expansion taking place today is in less familiar territory. July saw the opening of a Boston Pizza in Laval, the first in Quebec. There are also 29 locations in the U.S., from Alaska to Texas (though none in Massachusetts), and even one in Mexico.

As for where to go next, plans are under way in Australia and Britain, "where fran-

chises are not as well developed," says Williams.

**WITH over 200 outlets now open, it's become the largest 'casual, sit-down dining' chain in the country**

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chising is mature and Western concepts are known," hold obvious appeal, says Melville. Although more planning is required for areas beyond those culturally similar centres, he and Trifunovic intend to have a strategy developed by the fall.

Robert Sigurdson, consumer products analyst at Dresdner Securities Corp., attributes much of the company's success to a varied menu, reasonable prices and carefully researched location choices. The success or failure of a particular Boston Pizza, according to Melville, depends on three drivers: pizza, lunch, dinner and late-night. So it's important to find an environment that will provide a market at those times. If there are no businesses in the area, lunchtime sales will suffer. The same applies to late-night business if there are no movie theatres or other nearby entertainment establishments nearby. And, perhaps surprisingly, the presence of competitors can be an issue. "I'd like to think that people will eat at Boston Pizza every night, but that hasn't realistic," says Steve Clayton who, along with And Kaper, is the franchisee of three locations in the Toronto area and another currently under construction. In his view, nearby competition "creates a distraction" in the minds of people looking for a meal.

Boston Pizzas have traditionally been clustered in the suburbs of large cities or in smaller centres. Of the 10 locations in the Greater Toronto Area, for instance, nine are in the city itself, and both are well away from the downtown core. The lower real-estate costs help keep the overhead down, according to Sigurdson, and the availability of open space facilitates the construction of stand-alone buildings that conform to the company's image. In fact, in the U.S., where the small number of Boston Pizzas makes large-scale marketing campaigns impractical, look and location are the keys to creating brand awareness with the public, says Melville. But perhaps the company's greatest strength is its knowledge of its consumers' needs. The franchises realize they're "not catering to urban consumers who want a fancy meal," says Sigurdson.

The results continue to be encouraging. In the second quarter of 2006, the company enjoyed a 7.3-per-cent increase in sales over



The chain grew from the restaurant that Aguirre-Ortiz opened in Monterrey in 1984.

the same period in 2004. That's close to triple the industry average of three per cent, according to Sigurdson. Thriftiness in shambhala has risen 8.3 per cent, and overall revenue climbed by 10.4 per cent.

Inexpensive numbers—but they may also hint at danger in the horizon, according to Sigurdson. He sees the company becoming increasingly dependent on expansion to generate higher profits. There's a risk, in his view, of exhausting the market. This expansion—

**BOSTON** Pizza  
understands its appeal,  
and it's 'not catering  
to urban customers who  
want a fancy meal'

it took 32 years to open the first 100 stores in Canada but only eight for the next 100, with the 300th location planned by 2009—is increasingly taking Boston Pizza out of its western stronghold and into Ontario's sprawling, hyper-congested food market, prompting Sigurdson to wonder if the company isn't "moving a little too fast." And there are also some broader economic trends that could affect Boston Pizza's profitability over the long term. Real-estate costs are likely to rise, particularly in Ontario. Further expansion could become more difficult, warns Sigurdson. Furthermore, he says that ever-rising oil costs could begin to squeeze consumers' disposable income, forcing them to head to more upscale, fast-food establishments such as McDonald's, or even to stop eating out altogether.

But Melville feels good about the future. Even in uncertain economic times, he believes Boston Pizza's prices—barely at the top end, but not at the bottom—put it in a good position to catch people who are moving up or down in income brackets. As for ever-expansion, he says it's "obviously a consideration." But he goes on again to the company's research, which is designed to ensure new locations don't take business away from existing franchises. After all, Canada's big country, and things are just getting started out of the Prairies. So, what comes after Quebec? Well, why not Boston?

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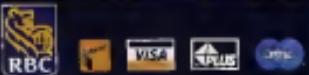


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## PLENTY TO WORRY ABOUT

Five nightmarish scenarios that could shatter the stock market

**T. S. ELIOT** called April the cruellest month, but it has historically been a good one for stocks. On a statistical basis, the cruellest months for investors are September and October, with September the worst of all. October is feared for its association with two crises—1929 and 1987. Think of September and October as the stock market's hurricane season. If there are going to be severe storms, they'll likely come then.

Since the market sell-offs come suddenly, there is little likelihood that investors can predict whether this will be one of these years of pain. Nevertheless, it is a time when global stock markets are behaving with the consciousness that has in the past preceded terror, what-hell-staying developments could come? Here's my list of five potential nightmares:

### 1. OIL SHOCK

The stock market and the global economy have absorbed oil's run from \$25 to \$65 a barrel with impressive equanimity. However, with world supply and demand in delicate balance, it takes little imagination to conceive of events that could send oil to \$100 and smash both the stock market and the economy. There is, effectively, no substitute or exit capacity left, so a civil war in Nigeria or Venezuela, a successful al-Qaeda assault on major Saudi facilities, or a new Arab-Israeli war could be worth 3,400 points on the Dow-Jones Industrial Average—with

roughly similar effect in Canada. Oil would also tumble, because investors would assume that far lower oil prices would be the ultimate outcome, and because they would sell stocks on which they had profits as they were forced to dump other sectors of their portfolios at loss. How probable? Maybe Osama knows, but as far as the rest of us, let's just add no worse than 50 to 1.

### 2. OIL DRAG

Although economists are collectively chary about the impact of \$60 oil on the economy, their confidence today belies their gloomy consensus in all prior years. Until late last

year, there was almost no press from a U.S. economist who was saying that the world economy would continue to prosper with \$60 oil. Indeed, some of the heavyweights, like Bill Ackman, argued that \$60 oil would limit U.S. economic growth down to European levels—one per cent or so.

Now, the U.S. consensus is that consumers can忍耐 expensive gasoline and heating costs because their home values have risen so sharply that they can keep tapping their equity with loans to keep the economy rolling. By some estimate, half the growth in consumer spending in the past year has been financed by borrowing against soaring home values. The cost of gasoline isn't a big deal when one's home wealth is equity up by more than \$10,000 a year.

But house prices can't keep rising forever. The prospect of a deflating housing bubble, or—horror—a peaked bubble at a time of record-high oil prices pushed the rest of fuel to new levels, as at this Halifax gas station

\$50 to \$65 oil, would surely be enough to knock the stock market for a loop. Odds against? At 50, no better than 4 to 1.

### 3. A NEW SARS

As the leader in the war on Islamic terrorism, the U.S. should be targeting all those powerful jihadis looking for an onward march to the 73 promised regions. Although the U.S. is a lot more vigilante than, say, Canada, all the homeland defence spending in the world can't prevent another attack. Odds against? Let's guess at 39 to 1.

### 4. THE FED OVERDOSES IT

Alan Greenspan is headed for retirement, and he wants to go out as the man who slew the speculative excesses that threaten the U.S. economy—notably the housing bubble. In all past periods of sustained Fed tightness, long-term interest rates rose. More importantly, the yield on the 30-year treasury note, which is the base for home mortgage loan yields, always rose, and that cooled out—or sometimes killed—the housing market, along with other kinds of asset speculation. Not this time.

In what Greenspan calls "a conservation," 30-year yields have actually fallen since he began raising the fed funds rate from its record low level of one per cent to the current 3.5 per cent. In percentage terms, that's the most massive Fed tightening ever, but money is still loose, speculation is still high, and house prices remain, as he puts it, "frothy." So at least some parts of the economy (Greenspan's favorite) using the term "bubble," launched but never identified a bubble and after it burst, even Niedrig at 5.000.]

When he was a private economist, Greenspan known as a poor forecaster. Perhaps that record encourages him to proclaim the impossibility of identifying asset price bubbles. Still, he keeps raising interest rates by 25 basis points at every meeting. The gap between him and the 10-year yield is now a relatively small 80 basis points, having started almost zero by year-end. Flat or inverted yield curves (in which short-term interest rates are higher than, or higher than, long-term rates) usually produce recessions. They can more usually produce stock market sell-offs. Odds against a sharp sell-off this time? Maybe 4 to 1.

### 5. A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

The flu virus now circulating among birds and animals from Indonesia to Siberia, known as H5N1, has the World Health Organization scared of a pandemic on the scale of the 1918 influenza that killed vastly more people than died in the First World War. Among the new facts is that an 100-per-over mortality rate among chickens—ever in history! Every flu known since 1918 has had modest or zero killing rates on humans.

Why is this important? Because the existing technology for making vaccines to influenza chicken eggs. Scientists are scrambling to create a human-based vaccine in time to avoid catastrophe should the flu mutate into a many-killed killer that spreads from human to human. So far, there's no conclusive evidence the virus has achieved that last, decisive recombination of amino acids in its genome that would put the world's human population at risk. But epidemiologists believe it could achieve this breakthrough in coming weeks, months or years. And, although intelligence on this compared to H5N1, should have been a lesson about marshalling defenses against rapidly moving pathogens, but the world remains woefully unprepared.

Although human deaths from the flu to date only number 55 outside China (which does not release its numbers), it's warning that the mortality rate is 50 per cent, compared with three per cent for the 1918 outbreak. Scientists hope that skeptical will get the message that the virus

explodes across the world. They think it will "burn" until it's done by keeping most of its host alive—so spread the infection. Odds against such an outbreak? Unknowable, but not outta sight.

On balance, then, investors should remain optimistic. Odds are, we'll come through the fall without a capital-P Fall. All bear markets begin with excessive bullishness. We aren't there yet, but we're getting close. Sleep well—particularly if you have some cash in your brokerage account to buy cheap stocks.

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# TAKING ONE FOR THE TEAM

Why men are warming up to the idea of a male contraceptive pill

**AMONG WOMEN**, the idea of a male birth control pill has always been a bit of a joke—a sexual fantasy we like to indulge, particularly on days when our own tired-out fertility has made us listless and ill-humoured. After all, what man is going to voluntarily join infidelity and all manner of disaster?—just so a woman might experience consequences-free sex? It would seem to demand an impossible depth of chivalry. Still, experts insist that, in one form or another, the male pill will be available in as little as two years, and that demand is greater than most people would have imagined. In fact, at this very moment, Oregon

and Schering AG, two European pharmaceutical firms, are sponsoring a series of clinical trials in the U.S. and across the continent, designed to test the effectiveness of what may be the most promising contender yet.

The quest for a safe, reliable and reversible form of male contraception has spanned more than 30 years and has taken multiple forms (pills, patches, implants, long-acting injections). It has also faced numerous obstacles. For many among them, later last year, in order for it to be a marketable product, a male chemical contraceptive would need to be virtually 100 per cent effective—a hefty demand, considering your average man produces 100 million sperm every day, compared to the one egg per month that women produce. “We had a drug for any adversary with 90 per cent efficacy—say to treat cancer—we’d be ecstatic,” says Dr. Bernard Béharier, an expert reproductive pharmacologist at McGill University. “But if you have a drug that suppresses even 90 per cent of the sperm, you have no efficacy. Because you need very few sperm to actually have fertility.”

The products that Oregon and Schering are testing is not a pill, exactly (scientists have yet to produce a male pill that won’t be broken down by the liver before it hits the bloodstream). Rather, it’s a small plastic rod, implanted into the upper arm, that releases a steady dose of etanzelotest—a synthetic form of progestin—directly into

the bloodstream. This user’s sperm production is then shut down, and he is rendered temporarily sterile.

Unfortunately, when you introduce large amounts of etanzelotest into the male body, you also drastically decrease the production of testosterone, which can result in such side effects as weight fluctuations and sexual dysfunction. So, in addition to the more general implants, each of the 150 volunteers is receiving testosterone supplements three times a week every 10 to 12 weeks. If the dosing is calculated properly, experts say, the side effects should be minimal. “Last year I got about sperm production in the testes,” says Béharier. “What that means is usually a reduction in horns and less fertility. They’ll be a little bit floppy, basically.”

Which brings us to a second major obstacle—the obvious public relations challenge posed by such phrases as “floppy testes.” A successful male contraceptive needs to be virtually free of side effects, particularly sexual ones. “With men, virility and masculinity are central to the core of their identity,” says Robert Miltzmaier, a sex researcher in the University of Waterloo and host of the Life Network’s *Sex, Boys & Chocolate*. “Doing anything that might impact those things would be a very big deal. I wonder how many men would be willing to go through such a thing.”

And yet, in a 2007 survey, the Kaiser Family Foundation, a U.S. non-profit group that specialises in health research, found that 71 per cent of male respondents said they would be willing to try a non-surgical male contraceptive alternative. There is demand for a middle ground between condoms (with arraignment, uncomfortable and expensive) and a full-fledged vasectomy.



Specialists in health research found that 71 per cent of male respondents said they would be willing to try a non-surgical male contraceptive alternative. There is demand for a middle ground between condoms (with arraignment, uncomfortable and expensive) and a full-fledged vasectomy.

The initial target market for these drugs, says Béharier, is men in their 30s and 40s in long-term, committed relationships. “They have had their desired family size, their spouse has another 15 to 20 years of potential fertility, and they don’t want to have a vasectomy with irreversible activity.” Also,

says Miltzmaier, a man in this position might be willing to take some of the heat off his wife or girlfriend, particularly if she’s over the age of 35, a smoker or overweight, and could be at extra risk for cancer or blood clots. A more cynical person might argue that part of what’s always driven the demand

and development of birth control is a mix-and-match between the sexes. In a study of Canadian women aged 18 to 24 by Ipsos-Reid, 65 per cent of women said they would never trust a man to take a male birth control pill, even if such a thing existed. When it comes to contraceptive pills, 76 per cent of them believe women are more responsible.

On the flip side, men are increasingly growing tired of women having all the power over reproduction. Each year, more than a million births in the U.S. result from pregnancies that men did not intend, according to the National Center for Health Statistics and Cornell University. And thanks to advances in genetic testing, new studies are showing that paternal disengagement (men unwillingly raising children who aren’t biologically their own) are much more frequent than many might have imagined. A British study published in the September issue of the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* found that, upon examining paternity information available between 1998 and 2004, paternal disengagement rates could be as high as one in 13.

“Basically, men are beginning to understand that things have changed,” says Dr. Wennan Chenell, a leading men’s issues activist and author of several books on gender relations. “In the old days it used to be that a woman’s biology was a woman’s destiny. So a woman was trapped by her biology. Today, a woman’s biology is a man’s duty only. All the power is in her hands.”

So for young men about town who have multiple partners and don’t want to be saddled with a baby, a male pill—in addition to a condom—might be an excellent option.

“This is a way that can protect themselves from getting that phone call from a woman saying, ‘Guess what? We’re pregnant together.’” says Miltzmaier. “It’s a bad life, an impossible life, the most romantic thing in the world, but they themselves is the whole ‘convenience’ factor from *Today’s* conversation.” ■

# LADY KILLERS

Inside a secret network of scientifically trained seducers

**BY HIS OWN ADMISSION,** Neil Strauss is not your standard issue pickup artist. An L.A.-based journalist—and the co-author of several insanely畅销 books, including Mötley Crüe's *The Dirt* and *Jenna Jameson's How to Make Love Like a Porn Star*—Strauss describes himself in grocery-list form: "I'm short and I'm bald. I have a big nose, a receding hairline and weird eyebrows on the side of my head." But put him in a bar filled with beautiful women, he says, and he transforms into a sort of superhero. A dark horse Casanova. A walking hunk of human candy.

Strauss wasn't born with these superpowers. In fact, only two years ago—single, miserable and in his early 30s—he had zero confidence with women. "I was an unattractive with myself," he says. "I used to fear women because they had this power over you to make you feel inadequate." Then one day, he received the phone call that would also lead to trajectory forever. An editor he knew asked him to take a look at an online guide to seducing women as fodder for a potential book. The reading he knew, he'd stumbled onto the heart of a covert online community of international pickup artists—self-styled masters of seduction with names like Mystery, Jagger and Sweetie— who devote all of their waking hours to perfecting and teaching the science of scoring.

Strauss embarked on a two-year crash course in advanced wavy pickup under the tutelage of that ragtag band of geniuses, ultimately achieving MTAIA (master pickup artist) status in his own right. He chronicles this journey—which consumed his life and landed him in “field-training” workshops in Toronto, Montreal, New York, Belgrade and beyond—in explicit and often revolting detail in his controversial new book, *The Game: Penetrating the Secret Society of Pickup Artists*, in stores on Sept. 6 (Strategic, page 41).

In hindsight, what really blew Strauss away about this community was how organized and sophisticated it is in its methods. “These guys are like social scientists,” he says. “They read a lot of books about evolution because they want to tap into the primal brain. They field-test their techniques hundreds and thousands of times. They’ve really figured out what you won’t find in psychology research papers or books.”

Early on, still feeling a little embarrassed about the whole thing, Strauss shelled out US\$800 to take part in an L.A. workshop offered by one of the group’s luminaries, a soft-spoken Tennessean named Mystery, whose Mystery Method



NEIL STRAUSS, 40, of Vancouver, is master of theicky “Mystery” technique

gives manipulating social dynamics in order to snag the most beautiful woman in any room. "It was like acting *The Matrix*," he says of that first experience. "Everything was so contrived." He learned that the more unattractive you make yourself, the more people would want you. The more you say, the more interesting you'll seem.

From Mystery, Strans learned about "pancocking" (dressing in flashy clothing and accessories to grab women's attention). He learned how to obtain an AMOG (alpha male of the group), and how to deliver an effective "tag" (This is what I wanted to do; used our beautiful women to demonstrate your lack of interest and to provoke her). For example, "Wow, you're like, the fifth person I've seen tonight wearing that exact shirt?" "As you're hearing it, you're thinking, 'that's a thug; that's a thug; that's never work on me,'" says Strans. "But the scary thing is—having approached thousands and thousands of people—it will work just about everyone."

The Mystery Method was only the beginning of Strans's education. His appetite whetted, he moved on to study Ross Jeffries and his school of Spend Seduction, whereby a man uses subliminal language patterns to attract the women he's targeting (Fresh 7). Mackey, the diagnostic character played by Tom Cruise in the A.C. Anderson film *Magnolia*, is said to have been based on Jeffries. He studied David DeAngelis' Double Your Desire techniques, in which a practitioner seduces his target through a combination of humor and arrogance called "codic fancy." And he learned about Greenwich and the Greenwich Method, in which "the only things students have to do is project uttermost smugness and exert physical contact until the woman rope them."

It wasn't long before Kyle was inventing and refining his own signature techniques. He began attracting disciples, acolytes enthralled in the community to whom he would offer counsel and mentorship. By this time, he had picked up, or "seized," hundreds of

unattractive women ("I changed their names in the book so they could read it and say, 'Well maybe that wasn't me,'" he says). One night, he used his skills to out-seduce Heidi Klum, the notorious Hollywood siren, who was trying to lure women into working for her at a bar in L.A. And for his pièce de resistance, while on stage at a magazine interview, he managed to distract and charm a cranky Britney Spears with rudimentary "chick crack" (subtlety of a spiritual or psychological nature—such as astrology and personality tests—that he says appeal to most women). By the end of their meeting, Spears had asked him for his phone number.

In 2003, emboldened by his success, Strans was ready to take things to the next level. Along with Mystery and several other PLAs—including a Koxman, Oct., an unknown named Tyler Durden after Brad Pitt's *American Psycho* character—Strans would open Project Hollywood, a lavish L.A. mansion in which the seduction masters would live and offer workshops to pilgrims from all over the world. Here, they

would raise the art of picking up, from a parasite to a full-fledged lifestyle. (Soon, there was Project Austin, Project Perth, Project Sydney.) Later, they would watch powerlessly as their sociological experiment collapsed as an amalgam of crushed egos and wounded pride. "I really felt it ruined tens of thousands of the *Plan* or something at the end," says Strans, who has since moved on with his current girlfriend, Lisa, the one woman who never responded to his pickup.

*The Game*, which has already been optioned by Columbia TriStar Films, is in many ways a triumph of misogyny, though Strans prefers to point to its honest, heartfelt communication of male sexual frustration. "On the surface, it was about picking up women in a crass way," he says. "But beneath it, in order to do that, you have to learn to love yourself if you expect other people to love you." Yes, self-love. And if you believe that, this guy who wants you to know another thing: it's not you, it's him.

# 'AS YOU'RE HEARING IT, YOU'RE THINKING, "THESE THINGS WOULD NEVER WORK ON ME'"

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD ALLEN

## EXCLUSIVE The Maclean's Excerpt



## SELECT A TARGET

Mystery solved: "I had no idea approaching a woman could be this easy"

An author Novelist calls it *The Game* (Rogan Books/Marger Collins), he has just arrived for his first *how-to-pick-up-women* workshop. After an enlightening lesson on *La, la, la* and *lippy* and his "wing" man, Strans and his fellow students are about to try the Mystery Method out for themselves at a nearby club.

We piled into a limo and drove to the Standard Lounge, a velvet-rope-guarded hotel lounge. It was here that Mystery shattered my model of reality. Lenita, I had once assumed on human interaction were extended far beyond what I ever thought possible. The man was a machine.

The Standard was dead when we walked in. We were too early. There were just two groups of people in the room: couplets near the entrance and two couples in the corner.

I was ready to leave. But then I saw Mystery approach the people in the corner. They were sitting on opposite couches across a glass table. The man was on one side

of them was Scott Baio, the actor best known for playing Chachi on *Happy Days*. Actions from him were two women, a blonde and a bleached blonde who looked like she'd stepped out of the pages of *Marie Claire*. Her cut-off white T-shirt was suspended so high into the air by *lippy* because that the bottom of it just hovered, hanging in the air above a shoddily gathered by *lippy* audience. The woman was Lisa's date. She was also, I gathered, Mystery's target.

His intentions were clear because he wasn't talking to her. Instead, he had his back turned to her and was showing something to Lisa and his friend, a well-dressed, well-tanned thirty-something who looked as if she could strength of adolescence. I moved in closer.

"Be careful with that," Lisa was saying. "It cost \$40,000."

Mystery had Lisa's watch in his hands. He placed it carefully on the table. "Now wait that," he commanded. "I turn my stomach around, increasing the flow of oxygen to my brain, and..."

**How it's done:**  
Tuesday, Aug. 12  
25 PM 2nd floor  
at a Vancouver bar



**Mystery now has a  
self-made-life  
university, courtesy  
of his audience**

As Mystery waved his hands over the watch, she sat and lay down on his lap. He waited 1.5 seconds, then wove his hands again, and slowly the watch sprang back to life—along with Bozo's heart. Mystery's audience of four burst into applause.

"Do something else," the blonde pleaded.

Mystery beatified her with a smile. "Wow, she's so demanding," he said, turning to Bozo. "She always like that."

We were witnessing group-think in action. The more Mystery performed for the guys, the more the blonde deserved for attention. And every time, he pushed her away and continued talking with two new friends.

"I don't usually go out," Bozo was telling Mystery. "I'm over it, and I'm too old."

After a few more nanoseconds, Mystery finally acknowledged the

blonde. He held his arm out. She placed her hands in his, and he began giving her a psychic reading. He was employing a technique I'd heard about called cold reading—the art of telling people truths about themselves without any prior knowledge of their personality or background in the field, all knowledge—however extreme—is power.

With each accurate sentence, Mystery spoke, the blonde's jaw dropped further open, until she started asking him about his job and his psychic abilities. Every response Mystery gave was intended to accentuate his youth and enthusiasm for the good life. Bozo said he had outgrown.

"I feel so old," Mystery said, hating her.

"How old are you?" she asked.

"27."

"That's not old. That's perfect."

# 'TELL ME THIS IS AN ILLUSION, AND HE'S NOT ACTUALLY STEALING MY GIRLFRIEND'

He went in.

Mystery called me over and whispered in my ear. He wanted me to talk to Bozo and his friend, to keep them occupied while he got on the girl. This was my first experience as a wing—a term Mystery had taken from *Top Gun*, along with words like target and obstacle.

I struggled to make small talk with them. But Bozo, looking nervously at Mystery and his date, cut me off. "Tell me this is all still fun," he said, "and he's not actually stealing my girlfriend."

Ten long nanoseconds later, Mystery stood up, put his arm around me, and we left the club. Outside, he pulled a credit card reader from his jacket pocket. It contained his phone number. "Did you get a good look at her?" Mystery asked. "That's what I'm on the game for. Everything I've learned I stand straight. It's all led up to this moment. And it worked." He beamed with self-satisfaction. "Now's the time for a demonstration!"

That was all it took. Sending a girl's right on in under a celebrity's name—has-been or not—was a first. Mystery was the real deal.

As we made the turn to the Key Club, Mystery was in the front cone mandarin of pickup: the three-second rule. A man has three seconds after spotting a woman to speak to her, and if he takes any longer, then not only is he going to think he's a creep who's been staring at her for too long, but he will start overlooking the approach, getting nervous, and probably blow it.

The moment we walked into the Key Club, Mystery put the three-second rule into action. Bending up to a group of women, he laid out his hands and asked, "What's your first impression of these? Not the big boobs, the black hair."

As the girls gathered around him, Bozo pulled me aside and urged me to endear the club and strengthen my first approach. A group of women realized by I tried to say anything. But the word "he" just barely squeaked out of my throat, not even loud enough for them to hear. As they continued past, I followed and grabbed one of the girls at the shoulder from behind. She turned around, stared, and gave me the whitening what-a-creep look that was the whole reason I was scared to talk to women in the first place.

"Never," I'm admonished me in his didactic voice, "approach a woman from behind. Always come from the front, but at a slight angle to it. It's not a dive and it's not confrontational. You should speak to her over your shoulder, so it looks like you might walk away at any minute. Then see Robert Blafield in *The Host*. (Whisper?) It's kind of like that."

A few minutes later, I spied a young, rippy-looking woman with long, tangled blonde hair and a puffy pink vest standing alone. I decided that approaching her would be the easy way to re-dream myself. I circled around until I was in the 10 o'clock position in front of her and said hi, managing myself approaching a harlot I didn't want to frighten.

"Oh my God," I said to her. "Did you see those two girls fighting outside?"

"No," she said. "What happened?"

She was interested. She was thinking about it. It was working.

"Um, two girls were fighting over this little guy who was half their size. It was pretty brutal. He was just standing there bragging at the police car and smirking the girls."

She giggled. We started talking about the club and the band playing there. She was very friendly and actually seemed grateful



## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**BHV**—down or web (demonstration of higher value), a routine in which the pickup artist displays a skill or attribute that makes his worth or appeal in the estimation of a woman or group; it is intended to make him stand out from the other, less interesting men in the club

**Elicit Values**—verb phrase: to draw out, through conversation, what is important to a person, usually with the intention of reaching a deep inner desire that motivates them. In terms of seduction, eliciting values may help a man determine that a woman who says she is looking for a rich husband is actually just looking for a feeling of safety and security.

**Freeze Out**—verb or noun: to ignore a woman to make her seem vanishingly, usually used as a technique to counter last-minute resistance.

**HON**—noun (Indicator of interest): a sign a woman gives a man that indirectly reveals she is attracted to or interested in him. These clients, generally amiable and subtle, include leaning toward a man when he speaks, asking mundane questions to keep a conversation going, or squeezing his hand when he takes her hand in his.

**Phase-Shift**—verb (to make the transition, during a one-on-one conversation with a woman, from ordinary talk-to-slower, usually chaperone-like, touch, or body language; intended to precede an flirtatious, taunt.

**Three-Second Rule**—noun: a guideline stating that a woman should be approached within three seconds of first seeing her. It is intended to prevent the man from thinking about the approach too much and getting nervous, as well as to keep him from creasing the woman out by staring at her for too long.

for the onlookers. I had an idea that approaching a woman could be first-only.

So I rolled up to me and whispered in my ear, "Go kono."

"What's kono?" I asked.

"Kono?" the girl replied.

She responded behind me, picked up my arm, and placed it on her shoulder. "Kono is when you coach a girl," he whispered. I felt the heat of her body and was reminded of how much I love human

owner. Pets like to be petted. It isn't sexual when a dog or a cat begs for physical affection. People are the same way we need touch but we're actually screwed up and obsessed that we get nervous and uncomfortable whenever another person touches us. And, unfortunately, I am no exception. As I spoke to her, my hand felt wrong on her shoulder. It was just causing these little some discomforted tugs, and I imagined her wondering what exactly it was doing there and how she could possibly extract me from under it. So I did the favor of removing it myself!

"Isolate her," Sam said.

I suggested sitting down, and we walked to a bench. Sam followed and sat behind me. As I'd been taught, I asked her to tell me the qualities she finds attractive in guys. She said humour and sex.

Fortunately, I have one of those qualities.

Suddenly, I felt her breath on my ear. "Stiff her hair," he was instructing.

I sniffed her hair, although I wasn't entirely sure what the point

"If you think you could have, then you could have," he said. "As soon as you ask yourself whether you should or shouldn't, that means you can't. And when you do, you phase shift. Imagine a giant gear chugging down in your head, and then poof! it starts hating on her. Tell her you just noticed she has beautiful skin, and start massaging her shoulders."

"What do you know it's okay?"

"What I do is, I look for IDIs. An IDI is an indicator of interest if she asks you what your name is, that's an IDI. If she asks you if you're single, that's an IDI. If you take her hands and squeeze them, and she squeezes back, that's an IDI. And as soon as I get three IDIs, I phase-shift. I don't even think about it. It's like a computer program."

"How do you kiss her?" Sawyer asked.

"I just say, 'Would you like to kiss me?'"

"And then what happens?"

"One of three things," Mystery said. "It'll say, 'Yes,' which is

## 'NEVER,' HE SAID, 'APPROACH A WOMAN FROM BEHIND. ALWAYS COME IN FROM THE FRONT.'

me. I figured Sam wanted me to nod her. So I said, "It smells like very nice, you like her." If she says, "Maybe," or hesitates, then you say, "Let's find out" and kiss her. And if she says, "No," you say, "I didn't say you could." If you looked like you had something on your mind."

"You see?" he grinned triumphantly. "You have nothing to lose. Every contingency is planned for. It's fail-safe. That is the Mystery kiss close."

I furiously scribbled every word of the kiss-close in my notebook. No one had ever told me how to kiss a girl before. It was just one of those things men were supposed to know on their own, like starting a car or repairing.

Stringing the fino with a notebook on my hip, turning to Mystery talk, I asked myself why I was really there. Thinking a course in picking up women wasn't the kind of thing normal people did. Even more disturbing, I wondered why it was so important to me, why I'd become so quickly obsessed with the online community and its leading practitioner.

Perhaps it was because attracting the opposite sex was the only area of my life in which I felt like a complete failure. Every time I walked down the cover area on a bar, I saw my own failure staring me in the face with red lipstick and black mascara. The combination of desire and paralysis was deadly. Perhaps signing up for Mystery's workshop had been an intelligent decision. After all, I was doing something proactive about my lameassness. Even the wise man dwelt in the fool's paradise.

I was a high spike on the libido to the next bar. "Do you think I could have kissed her?" I asked Mystery.

**ON THE WEB** Visit the website at [www.knowherelife.com](http://www.knowherelife.com) for more information.

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# Canada's Shopping Magazine

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# STELLAR PERFORMANCE

Admired by their peers, Canada's astronomers are making an international mark stirring some cosmic dust

**CANADIANS ARE** masters of the universe. Just look at the numbers. Sure, the U.S. leads the world in spending on space research, laying out roughly US\$87 per American each year, while Britain, France and Germany budget between US\$8 and US\$35 for every citizen. Canada spends just US\$11 per capita, less even than Australia. Yet by all important measures—the confidence of their peers—Canadian astronomers produce some of the best astrophysical science in the planet. Thomson Scientific, a Philadelphia-based information clearing house, reported Canadian scientists published 4,626 research papers on space in the past decade. Those studies have been referenced 76,923 times in other scientific papers, for an average citation rate of 15.9%. U.S. scientists produced many more papers in total, but they were cited just 18.18 times—good, but only for second place. Canadian astronomers, says Thomson spokesman Rodney Yancey, “influence the field a great deal.”

If one were to list Canada’s 137 most cited scientists from the many different fields of study, about 15 would be astronomers, says Jayant Matthews, associate professor of astronomy at the University of British Columbia. It’s a remarkable fact given the relatively small size of the community. “I can assure you,” says Matthews, “astronomers don’t represent 10 per cent of the Canadian scientific population.”

William Harris, a frequently-cited astronomer at McMaster University in Hamilton, likens the Canadian success to a talented violinist making a move with next to no money. The young violinist is forced to be innovative. And while limited means can draw the best out of people, it also can be a double-edged sword. The downfalls, says Matthews, is “how we’re expected to pull off this every time on a shrinking budget.”

Lack of funding has forced sciences to pick their projects wisely, observes Ray Carlberg, an astrophysicist professor at the University of Waterloo. “We can’t do everything



The star system known as HD 8857, 28,000 light years from Earth—one of the closest of the clusters is the tiny in bottom. An astronomical observatory near Victoria, B.C., left, MOST, getting ready for its launch in 2007. Right, related; an artist's conception of the probe, 10 m telescope that Canada is considering.

If we were to have longer,” he says. “There are a million and one choices that you can make, and Canadian astronomers, as a group, clearly make some good ones.”

In that group a number of academics stand out. Last year’s most quoted paper—1,038 times—capped the methodology of afterglow of the big bang, in the process

helping confirm theories of how the universe came to be. It was written by 17 international scientists, among them Mark Halpern of the University of British Columbia. Another bright light is Peter Serafini, an astronomer at the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics near Victoria. He is known for developing a key software program



called DAOPHOT, the gold standard for analysing star clusters. And Don VandenBerg at the University of Victoria is internationally acclaimed for his work on modelling stars of different sizes and composition. Other astronomers employ VandenBerg’s findings like a template, to gauge the age of stars. For Canadians, it’s a new time to be star-

ring up some cosmic dust. The universe is a shipping place. In 1998, scientists at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in California found that, contrary to earlier notions, the 13.7-billion-year-old universe isn’t slowing but rather accelerating the implosion that began with the big bang. Why? Because of something called dark energy, a repulsive force that somehow causes stars and other exotic entities to move faster than gravity should allow. Other discoveries have also changed our perception of the universe. It was just over a decade ago when astronomers discovered the first planet to orbit a star other than our own. Today, almost 150 of those so-called exoplanets have been identified. In July, three U.S. researchers said they had confirmed a 10th planet in our solar system, out past Pluto and about 1.5 times its size.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Milky Way was considered the sun of our universe. Canadians helped change that. In the run-up to the First World War, the country’s leaders had the foresight to build what was then the world’s largest telescope.

Located just outside Victoria on Little Soutch Mountain and still in operation, the 3.1 m wide telescope at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory didn’t hold the title long. It did, however, help the world better understand the fits of the willya. Why? Today we believe a minimum of 100 billion stars—and that there are more than 200 billion galaxies in the known universe.

In the 1990s, Canada debated where to invest its money. Should we build a telescope at home or go international? The decision was to join a consortium with France and Hawaii, and build an observatory on the summit of Mauna Kea. “We didn’t have a lot to put on the table compared to the overall cost,” recalls Matthews. “But we had expertise, so we had a contribution to the project out of proportion to the money.” Since then, Canada has also entered into other multinational partnerships and built two larger 8-m telescopes, one at Mauna Kea and the other at an observatory on Cerro Paranal in the Chilean Andes.

What Canada lacked until only recently was the ability to make observations from space. That changed with MOST, a sat-

“WE astronomers are obsessed with size, but even we underestimated what you could do with a 15-cm telescope in orbit!”

ellite-sized, \$10-million rocket-borne telescope that was blasted into space in 2003. Backed by the Canadian Space Agency, MOST has already studied nine exoplanets and has another one, maybe three years to go, says Matthews, the project’s mission scientist. MOST—for microlensing and oscillation of stars—is one of the first tools to allow Canadian astronomers to home in on and study individual stars by measuring any light variations detectable only from space. In the lead up to the launch, researchers boldly stated MOST could also be used to look for exoplanets. “We astronomers tend to be obsessed with size—we’re always wanting to make bigger and bigger telescopes—while the MOST philosophy was that size didn’t always matter,” says Matthews. “But even we underestimated what we could do with a 15-cm telescope in orbit, with the right equipment attached to it.”

And so it continues. Canada once again wants to build the world’s largest telescope. Currently, the biggest are in the order of 16 m in diameter. However, there are now more than a dozen projects aimed at building a 30-m wide telescope. Canada, through the Association of Canadian Universities for Research in Astronomy, has teamed with two U.S. universities and another major national agency to build what’s being called the TMT for the Thirty Meter Telescope. It’s expected to cost nearly \$1 billion, and Canada would have a 25-per-cent stake. The project is now in the design phase, and construction—which will include the planning assembly of more than 700 hexagonal mirrors—is expected to take five years. “This is as big as a bathroom mirror,” says Carlberg. “It’s in the realm of big science.”

Through the Canadian Space Agency,

we are also a partner in the successor to NASA’s revolutionary Hubble Space Telescope. Canada has a five-per-cent share in the James Webb Space Telescope, NASA’s next generation eye in the sky that is due to launch in 2011 and will orbit about 1.5 million km above Earth. Canada’s share may not sound like much, says Harris, “but it’s enough to give us a seat on the board of direction.” It should be easier. Canada continues to get a big bang for its buck. ■

# RUMBLE ON THE ROCK

Margaret Wente was one thing. But why is local hero Mary Walsh making fun of Newfoundlanders?

**IN A MAKESHIFT** greenhouse in pernicious Turkey, Nfld., actors Mary Walsh and Rick Baland are done up in their Sunday best—but all sense of decorum is lost when the coffee pots open in the middle of a brutal Baland's character, a drunk, didn't put the final screen in the box. "Actually," he says to his wife, played by Walsh, "we haven't acted in years." This is CBC's *Matching, Matching & Disputing*—a show full of exaggerated accents and jargon, lowbrow ditties and crude language. And not surprisingly, the

cause of much consternation on the Rock.

Baland, a 53-year-old theatre veteran, who also plays his fellow Newfoundlanders' concern: "I'll tell you a story about my grandmother. My uncle Fred was at university and he came back with the idea of petanque studies and they were fishing for salmon up at Portland Creek. When they got home my grandmother was beside herself as to what to have for lunch. There was all kinds of leftover and salmon, but she thought these things were auxiliary. So we had to go to the store and buy cans of luncheon meat, because it was bought and that would be sensible. It's sort of like this—people these days there are people looking at them from outside, the very things and the way they look is sometimes not good enough."

The pilot episode of *Matching, Matching & Disputing* (produced and co-written by Walsh) was in January as part of a CBC test—the broadcaster ran three shows and asked for public feedback before making any commitments. Walsh's show, about the Party family who own a funeral home/cremation chapel/humane service, got the most responses—more than 4,700 calls and emails, 93 per cent positive. "I figured a certain portion of Newfoundlanders wouldn't like it because traditionally they don't," says CBC exec George Anthony, who ordered the six episodes that are being filmed now and will run in the near year. "There's a pedigree that they like COOGO, but the majority of the

island absolutely adored it. These are sheep people saying we don't like the way you're representing us."

This time around, that group's primordial. Within Newfoundland itself there was no-one but Joel Hynd—described as "quite a hooligan." Letters were written to editors and opinion pieces in the province's papers, bloggers had a field day and the phone lines at radio call-in shows lit up. "Newfoundlanders felt a little embarrassed by such accusations," says John's radio host Randy Stinson. "That

the show lent credence to the Newfoundland idea." While this seems to be a lot of fuss over a little comedy series, it speaks to a much bigger issue of cultural identity in Newfoundland. These days there's a real split between people who think laughing at themselves and referring to themselves in New-

foundland Atlantic Accords debate over offshore oil revenues, and close on the heels of a Margaret Wente column in the *Globe and Mail* attacking "Rural Newfoundland as probably the most vapid and narrow welfare ghetto in the world."

Surprisingly low.

Sensitivity was understandably high. "We are extraordinarily hard-working," says Walsh, 53. "I think people were shocked that Wente said those things." They were even more shocked when Walsh, the province's biggest TV star, came out right after with a show about alcohol, drift and coarse rural Newfoundland aimed at a national audience. Viewer Andrew Shuter runs a local CBC news program. "It was like watching

**'WHEN** the bride's water broke as she was getting married—that kind of put a damper on Newfoundlanders'



Margaret Wente later came to life." And "Everybody hates Mary" read the headline in the St. John's Telegram.

Eight months later, things have calmed down somewhat. These days, Newfoundlanders are much angrier over the transfer of their weather reporting from Gander to Dartmouth, N.S.—complaining that Gander casting has been inconsistent, to put it mildly. But as it turns out, feelings in Newfoundland about Walsh and her show remain divided. Reaction to the pilot was split down the middle in the St. John's house of Haywood Pike, 55, and Paul Roberts, 49 Pike, a business consultant, liked it and laughed at some of the wacky scenes, like when one of the younger couples reads "have sex in a coffin." But Roberts, a safety professional, says her husband has a "different" sense of humor. She thought the show was sick and made Newfoundlanders look stupid. "They can represent our heritage, but they don't have to reinforce it with coarse language and the sexual activity."

Debbie Myres works at a bank near the set in Torbay, and has been watching the filming of the new episodes on her laptop. She

laughed during the pilot, but then was part of a party that bothered her. "When the bride's water broke she was getting married—that kind of put a damper on Newfoundlanders." City councillor Sharonie Duff reluctantly admits she didn't like the show. "Mary is a good friend of mine, and my nephew and godson are working on that show, but I just found it a little too profane, a little too raunchy, and I think it tended to reinforce that negative type of the naive Newfoundlander. Maybe they put all their over-the-top stuff in the first one, like screwing in the miffin, but I'm told that was just the start."

It's true—the set in Torbay阜ffulness is not the order of the day. "Nick and Debbie's storyline is pretty f---ed up," says Hynes, who plays Nick, the guy who likes to get it on in the coffin. "These are bizarre stories to come. There are no sacred cows at all." Of all the cast members, Hynes, 38, is the most sensitive to Newfoundlanders' concerns. "I did understand," says the native of

Walsh and Baland and a son-in-law, in pretty much

Calvert, an outport of 300 people. "There's a real identity crisis going on here—it's been ongoing for 20 years, but it peaked with that Margaret Wente column and then when this show aired. People want us to be portrayed as something that we're not always. We're not a bunch of scholars and academics and stand-up high society people. But we have a really unique culture that is grounded in our humor and our accent. This is a situation where we're enabling our selves to laugh at ourselves." But he insists that Nick, a "real hard-feller," is a true rip roagger. "Where I come from, everybody thinks and everybody does everything as measured and there's not much levity and there's a lot of flip-flopping and shit like that."

While Hynes got a jazzy role, columnist Sheila Majander—a Burlington, Nfld., native who found success in Los Angeles—is stuck playing a dim-witted, bullied grandfather. Majander, 33, despises the part. "He's talkative, but a dumb person. I think he's one of the most sympathetic characters because he's not yelling at everybody to shut up. I'm the one who's having a bearing." And it's true—some fans of

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# MACLEAN'S

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the comedian are disappointed. "Shawn Majeski is really smart," says St. John's coffee singer Emily Bridger, 19, "and it was a total waste of him."

The rest of the cast is rounded out by fellow Newfoundlanders Susan Kent, Joanne Harris, Sherry White and Captain Mark McKenna—each portraying a more sharp-tongued and foul-mouthed character than the last. Walsh, who plays a physical mother of three and the brains behind the bickering, is adamant that she's created realistic characters. "My mother's from Conception Harbor, and they are the sweetest old ladies in the whole world there," she says. "They're fat faces like apple dolls—and the language they use would eat your general butt."

Walsh had come up with the funeral/wedding/ambulance idea decades ago, when she saw the phrase *Hatching, Matching & Dispatching*, written on the side of an ambulance. Then her first *Bridget* beat her to the on-air TV pounds. But last year she left *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* to go this new series off the ground. "I didn't want to do any Mary Princess Warrior mix," she says. Walsh and Beland were cut and last-reviewed funeral-directors—and ended up being the Forsys on our particular cast from a Newfoundland export. "The family that we represent," says Beland, "had a garage first. But their women's storage carts to keep in business, so they started a bus service. The bus service led to an ambulance service, and once they had that, they thought, 'We might as well have a house.' Then there's a need that they get into the funeral business." In her interview, Beland heard her own voice of one day a woman gave birth in their ambulance, a young bride got married in their reception hall, and they had a funeral for a grandmother that evening. "What's obviously wasn't aware of it's load of contradictions when she made her comments about lazy Newfoundlanders."

But some locals remain puzzled by the Forsys. "My father was a clogman," says housewife Ed Smith, author of the "Everybody loves Mary" column, "and we got shipped from there to there to there and I never seen any of the characters from that show in any of the communities we lived in." It's a 34-year-old image of a Newfoundland, according to public affairs consultant Ed Flitter. "People reacted really strongly to it because it didn't reflect what they

are today. Maybe Mary was taking a concept that was lying around a while, or making a return to the roots of where she started out. Or maybe the market for the show isn't actually here, but on the mainland. So if you want to talk to a restricted audience, give them a cartoon they know."

Walsh doesn't see it that way—she claims she thought only Newfoundlanders would get the show. And despite the silliness of *Hatching, Matching & Dispatching*, sharp and deeper family issues exploded. The Forsys live, work and play together—something Walsh is interested in because she feels she never had it herself. "I have seven brothers and sisters and a mother and father," says the native of St. John's. "They lived at 7 Carter's Hill, and I lived at 9 Carter's Hill with my aunt May, uncle Phineas and uncle Jack." Walsh says she was moved next door at the age of eight months because she had pneumonia.

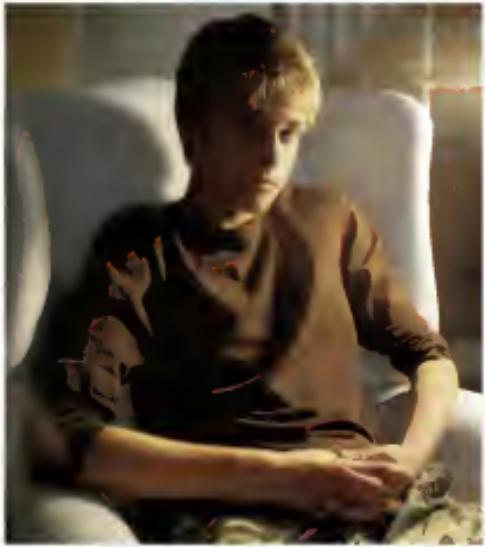
## 'THEY'VE GOT faces like apple dolls— and the language they use would curl your genital hairs'

nowhere and her family's house was too damp. But even when her parents and siblings moved around the bay to Conception Harbour, 13-year-old Mary stayed in St. John's with her aunt and uncle. "I spent most of my life terrified and concerned and devastated and heartbroken that I didn't belong—but I feel like it's all worked out pretty good. I had two mothers and now I get to be part of a family but I don't have to be invited to any dances."

With *Hatching, Matching & Dispatching*, though, she has been. "When people get mad about the show, I get so angry," Walsh says. "I was thinking, it was just like my dad [Simpson]. But you've got to convince the CBC that it could be done here, then so much equipment has to be brought in. You pull in money to the top of the hill and then everyone says, 'What the f--- did you put the park here for?' Then it struck me that everything I have, everything I am, I owe to Newfoundland. I could only stay mad for a little while."

But the question is, with so many back-to-back-pushing episodes on the way, how long can Newfoundlanders stand? "People reacted really largely because it didn't reflect what they

# BACKTALK



## TV | Sorry girls, but the newest *Degrassi* kid has a dark side

Jamie Johnson is pretty angry about the two fatalities on her new show. Johnston makes his debut this month during the 20th anniversary season. It's the longest run of his career, which started with modelling and includes short stints on several Canadian TV shows. "Turns out, he's not so strong in the pressure test—his older brother Chris has appeared as a student since 2002." "He did a scene together the other day," says the younger Johnston. "He was in the background in one of the shows." Johnston, meanwhile, is headed to the front of the class.

—Dawn Johnson  
producer  
Linda Schuyler

Johnson, a tall, dark Toronto teen, enrolled in Guelph's most popular school. He wanted to study law but found himself drawn to the lesions next door. This season, Jenifer's boyfriend moves away and the lives and loves more women share a pad with the free-wheeling Shrine McCutcheon (Katherine Moennig). It's two heartbreakers under one roof. Wonder what Carrie Bradshaw would say about that?

Johnston, a tall, dark Toronto teen, enrolled in Guelph's most popular school.

## TV | Admit it, you're curious

Stop the presses! — The L Word had a straight audience. It seems the lesbiodrama (which has stars Sept. 1 on Showtime) doesn't only appeal to the Straight crowd. In fact, the same-sex trials, tribulations and hotly sexed scenes of a group of L.A. women in filling the void left by homo girl-fave Sex and the City—leading to viewing parties, coffee talk and identification with certain characters. "People look for stories that resonate with their own experiences," says creator Lisa Cholodenko, "but also ones telling them something about what they don't know." So, straight people recognize the love in the relationships and are curious about the sex.



Most lesbians at one point in their lives identified themselves as straight women—and that's where it's at. L Word star Jenifer Kohl, a confused young writer last season, is now played by Canadian actress Lisa Marie Kircher (above), moved to L.A. to be with her boyfriend, but found herself drawn to the lesbians next door. This season, Jenifer's boyfriend moves away and the lives and loves more women share a pad with the free-wheeling Shrine McCutcheon (Katherine Moennig). It's two heartbreakers under one roof. Wonder what Carrie Bradshaw would say about that?

SHARNA BEZEL

## Books | Nothing fake about non-fiction

When journalist Thomas Golding visited *The Daily Show* couple of months ago with his new book, *200 People Who Are Destroying Our America*, Jon Stewart took him into his own set, at second's notice for involving them. "We're on the first," "She hasn't naked either," said Golding, "except Stewart, much to the delight of his usual audience—who watched the two play out Golding's picks for nearly 20 minutes. It was just a couple of minutes of reading it alone together, but it made for great TV.

Then he brought lots of "middlemen" from his press, and he was let at last get back to his day job—interv-



## Film | Katharine Isabelle has a thing for thrill rides

Katharine Isabelle has released a long list of scary movie credits, including the *Ginger Snaps* trilogy, *Frailty* vs. *Jesus*, and new *Show Me*—about two spazzy kids who unpack a history lesson and the women inside. But the 32-year-old Vancouverite prefers Canadian indie films. She told us about two of her favorites.

1. *Parkourier* (2000) "A group of teens break into a theme park and you never quite know exactly whether to kill themselves by jumping off a roller coaster, or so so dramatic—how it's meant to be in the film, we're actually told the traps all the time."
2. *On the Come* (2000) "It's set in Vancouver's downtown东区. Director Mathieu Dube had been a social worker there for years. I'd driven through the area before, but after spending months there playing a crackhead, I don't think of the area the same."

KAREN MARLEY

## MACLEAN'S 100 | TOP 10

Tanya Kim's not-so-predictable Canadian picks

How retrofuturist. When Tanya Kim picked her Top 10 Canadian songs of all time, the last of CTV's estate tally and eTalk #10 were the network's new music show's acclaimed "classics" (see list on p. 6).

1. *Mon Amour* Ra Ra Riot
2. *Don't Be Cruel* Hayley Williams
3. *Sadness* K'Naan
4. *Whatever It Takes* Ross Smith
5. *State of Your Heart* Jilly Black
6. *John Denver* Daniel Lewis
7. *Polyester* (less) Arctic Fire
8. *Wives & Allies* Tragically Hip
9. *Never Believe* Billy Talent
10. *(s)I* inside and out, Feist
10. *(s)I* Working for the Weekend, Lowerboy



Tanya Kim during Maclean's centenary

Kim has a very short musical memory

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## Ron Sexsmith finishes John Intini's sentences

In the '80s, long before landing a recording deal, Ron Sexsmith used to pay the rent by hustling mail between office buildings in Toronto's downtown core. That's when he met Don Kinn, a fellow courier who would become his long-time drummer, and write one of the tracks (Burdings) in *My Country* that ended up on Sexsmith's debut—his recently released joint project, Sexsmith & Kinn. Michaela's Associate Editor John Intini's sentences

**you who had four kids. I wasn't smooth.**  
WHEN I WAS A KID I THOUGHT THAT ALL ADULTS WERE... **naïve**

**MY FAVOURITE NIGHTCLUB** ...is a friendly alehouse. I've heard that John Lennon used to drink it. It's basically a very potent mikado.

**I USED TO...** have a detective agency when I was about 13. I had a sign out front of my house and it read "I'm a private investigator". And I convinced the neighborhood and we actually I ended a case. A woman had lost a watch and we spent a day looking for it. We didn't find it but she gave us \$5 each anyway.

**10 LOST TO...** a bell ringer.

**FOR MORE "JOHN INTINI'S SENTENCES"** VISIT [WWW.MACLEANS.CA/PEOPLE](http://WWW.MACLEANS.CA/PEOPLE)

**THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SOUND IN THE WORLD...** is coffee brewing.  
**THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT MY FAMILY...** is that nobody smiles. Why? Kind of like the Brady Bunch from hell. My mom had three boys and me and a

**HAVING** children can open up doors I never thought I'd open, bring hair and gold teeth—**THE LEAST PREDICTABLE** is the morning of a You're Hired! New Balance Lip Syncing.

## Books | Strangers in a strange land

Three years ago, Margaret MacMillan inspired a chorus of international praise when the Princeton historian wrote *A Century Lost and Found: The Great Treaty that Ended the First World War*. In ignorance of the day, MacMillan's focus is narrow, but the result is just as thought-provoking. Her intellectual subjects—wives of British officials in India, the Empress crown jewel—were, in many cases, far more willing negotiators in world war. Many were defeated by the climate and loneliness, but most managed to carry on their family duties, leaving behind a love with India, especially in the early days of their stay before event racism lost them rapidly. Despite a train wreck shortly after, a few in MacMillan's pantheon of culture for perspective. Men were more wary, though, on the trip, dedicating themselves to their families, careers or medical personnel, missionaries and political negotiators.

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10. <b>THE TIGER'S TAIL</b> (New French) <b>C</b>	\$12.95	\$24.95

### Non-fiction

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5. <b>AN IRISH COOKBOOK</b> (New French) <b>C</b>	\$12.95
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# PIGLETS AND RESTAURANTS

In Montreal's restaurant business, you really needed a gimmick

"As we began to talk, it was our idea [David Radler's] father had owned *Le Latin Qui Bouge*, a popular Montreal restaurant in the 1950s that attracted patrons by having tiny penguins run around the floor."

—Peter C. Newman, *Maclean's*, Aug. 29, 2005

**PEOPLE DON'T REMEMBER** how tough it was back then. The restaurant business was more competitive in Montreal in the 1950s and '60s than in any other town in Canada. You needed a gimmick, a hook. After David Radler's pop started with the penguins, he had one of a new standard. Where's the running penguin, people would say.

You'd go to one of the big honks on St-Jean Street in your leisure, looking for a loan. But if you didn't have a gimmick, the loan officer would just wave at you. Then he'd drag, "I don't see any running penguins here," he'd say. And that was how you knew you wouldn't be getting a loan.

You couldn't blame the bank guy. He was just protecting his investment. A restaurant with out something special just wouldn't do. If you just wanted to put out a nice place of prime with some chintz and maybe a bowl of spicy olives, you were dead. Dead.

Nate Fedethoff started all Restaurants in Montreal were all pretty much the same in those days, until Eaton's hired Nate to manage that fancy dining room they used to have on the top floor. This was in maybe 1954. But doing Nate down, he changes the name. Before, it was just the dining room at Eaton's. Now it was *Le Casse du Déjeuner*. We'll laugh! Look who's putting on art. But this first weekend, Nate had to turn the chintz away, it was so busy. That sure wiped the smile off our faces.

Still, Nate wasn't undaunted. Afternoons months he bought a waddled penguin from a flea market in Keweenaw for \$7. It'll never forget it. He brings this penguin in to Eaton's and

parts it up fresh so it's waddling beside the crêpe d' when you walk in. People went crazy for that waddled penguin. There were lineups down two flights of stairs. People standing in Bedrock and Laramie waiting to get upshots for a good.

But you remember how Nate was though. You was never enough for that guy. Two months after the penguin, he hired the blind guy who played the spoons. That locked off.



the big moe that put him out of business for good.

Sol, well all learned our lesson. After the name change and the penguin, you couldn't just eat an ordinary restaurant with an ordinary menu any more in Montreal. Tommy Calabrese caught on real quick. He'd been running this sleepy little lounge joint on Mount Royal street called *Chez Calabrese*. One day I'm walking past his place and he's got a new sign up, *Le Latin qui Bouge* or Calabre. I look in the window and Tommy's hired three of those Skinner guys in their little car�olve around between the tables.

Well, you know the rest of the story. By 1965, Tommy was rich as thieves. "Tom tells' ya, Dan?" he said to me once, "he'd just popped me cap head. Skinner can't Skinner can't!" In no time, he'd opened new locations in St. Leonard and Chomedey. Always with the Skinner can. People sit it up. Pretty soon Tommy was spending \$300 a month just on these little bins they wore with the tunics. They kept flying off. Those Skinner, they drove fast.

By now we were in the legendary days of the Montreal restaurant business. You didn't only need a gimmick, you needed a good one. *Clovers with balloons* wouldn't do. Jenny "Pens" Lafleur opened a Chinese restaurant on Place du Prince. Jenny's hook was that every fourth plate he served was actually encrusted with live spiders. Pretty soon the mayor was a regular there. But that only lasted until Nelly Woudeleit opened that steakhouse with the Indian tapdorees, *Le Plaza Indien*. One time Pierre Trudeau was having lunch in a corner booth with Jean Lesage, debating transport policy, and just as Lesage started raising his voice, the tapdoree opened under him and he fell right through the floor. Bay, after that, you couldn't keep Les away from that place with a stick.

I'm not sure when the golden age ended. Some folks make it back to that business with the atomic knife thrower at *Le Sûisse Gourmand* in '71. Me, I think it was already over before that.

Lucky is a Party-O'Donnell to run a good idea. When he opened that combination colpo jazz and amateur ward on Ste-Catherine Street in '99, the public just nared on him. I'll never forget that classic line from Vic Vogel: "Very accurate's he been."

Pony died like a couple of years later. The golden years never last.

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